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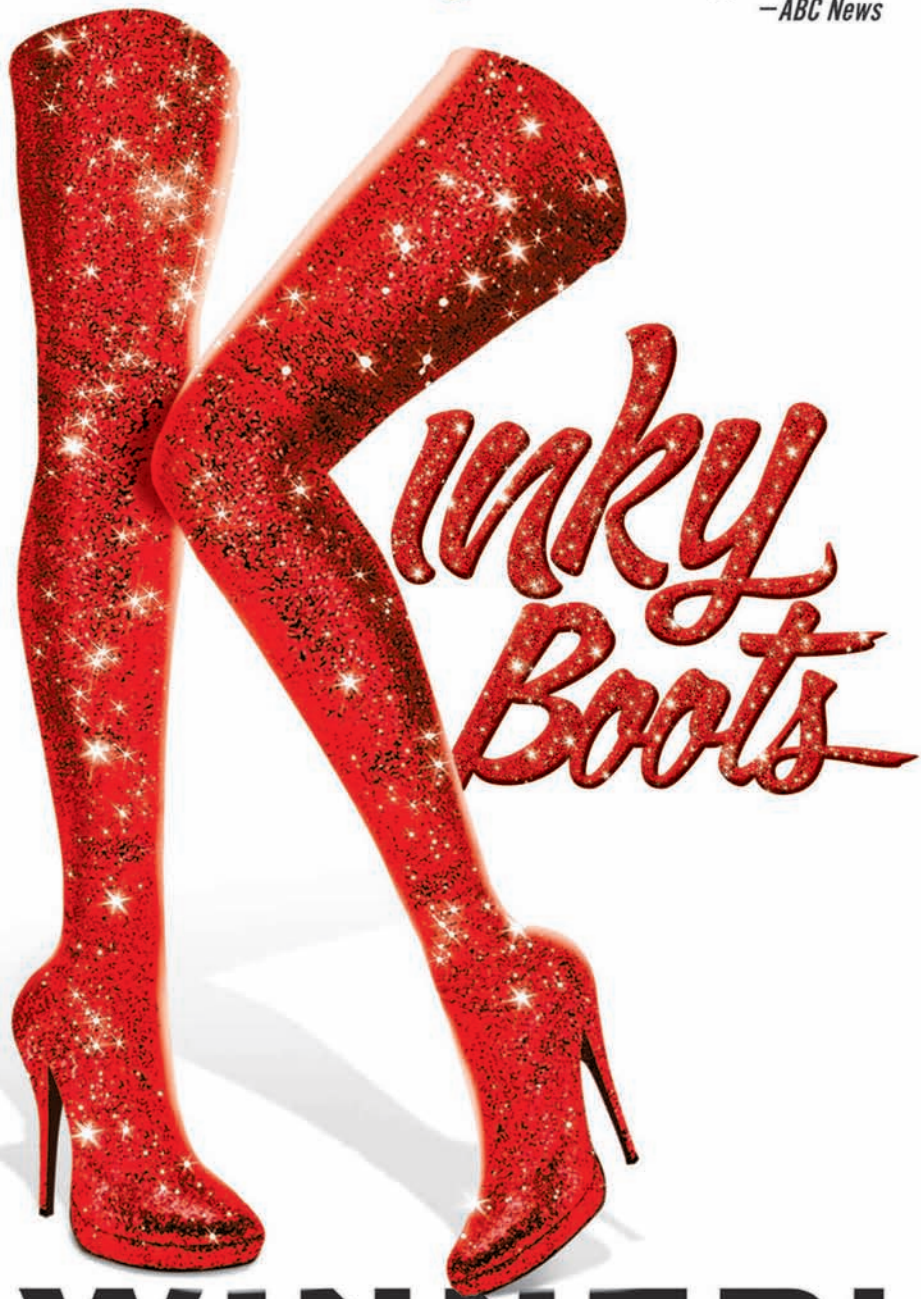
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### Wear red to City Hall

GALA North Texas is organizing a wear red to City Hall night to support the Plano Equal Rights Ordinance.

On Monday, Feb. 23, Plano City Council could announce if Plano Citizens United collected enough valid signatures to put the ordinance on the ballot.

Plano City Hall is at 1520 K Ave., Plano. Meetings start at 7 p.m. GALA suggests arriving at 6 p.m. because of the expected large turnout.

— David Taffet

### Easter in the Park in danger of cancellation



One of Oak Lawn's longest-running traditions is in danger of being cancelled this year, unless organizers can find sponsors and other donors to help pay for the event.

Cedar Springs Merchants Association is "asking for the community's help" in raising the funds necessary to stage the annual Easter in Lee Park event on April 5.

CSMA President Alan Pierce said: "It would be a tragedy to lose this great Easter tradition in Dallas. We must ask for help in order to continue it."

CSMA officials noted that new requirements imposed by the city, including a fence around the perimeter of the park, security and permits, have upped the cost of staging the event to \$25,000, "a level no longer sustainable by the association itself," according to a statement released by CSMA on Wednesday evening, Feb. 18.

CSMA has produced Easter in Lee Park in Dallas since 2011, after the city of Dallas asked the association for help to keep the event going. CSMA shouldered responsibility for staging Easter in Lee Park after the Turtle Creek Association changed its spring event date.

CSMA has continued to fund the event, even though it has lost money each year since, the statement said.

CSMA has asked that potential sponsors and donors contribute through a new GoFundMe campaign established this week. To contribute, visit [EasterInLeePark.com](http://EasterInLeePark.com), where sponsorship opportunities and donor levels are listed.

— Tammye Nash

### HERO trial ends with mixed outcome

A jury trial to determine whether opponents of the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance collected enough valid signatures to force a repeal or election on the issue ended with a mixed verdict last week. Findings were sent to the judge who will deliberate on the outcome.

To repeal HERO or call for an election, opponents needed 17,000 signatures. They turned in petitions with more than 50,000 signatures, but the city determined less than 4,000 were valid.

Pages of petitions were invalidated by the city because they were not notarized. Others were not signed by Houston voters. Some pages had the same handwriting on every line. Some pages were the result of signature table parties — one person signed the first line on each page, another the next line. Other pages were unsigned by the petition circulator.

When all of those fraudulent signatures were thrown out, opponents decided to sue.

The jury findings go to the judge who has broad discretion. However he finally rules — that there are enough valid signatures to proceed with a recall election or there aren't — the losing side is expected to appeal. The opposition is claiming victory, however, because the jury didn't find fraud was involved. The Houston recall organizers are working with Prestonwood Baptist Church and others to recall the Plano Equal Rights Ordinance that does not have the number of protections provided in Houston's law and allows anyone to claim a religious exemption in order to discriminate.

— David Taffet



### Couple Weds to Celebrate Anniversary

# 45th

To mark their 45th anniversary as a couple, John Johnson and Louis Schneider were married Sunday, February 1st, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Pictured (l to r) are Louis, Pastor Sarah TevisTownes, and John.

# Dallas City Council updates definition of spouse



**RECOGNITION** | Employees, pensioners and current and former city council members gathered outside the Dallas City Council briefing room after pension policies for same-sex couples were equalized. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Dallas city, county retirees receive equal pension benefits; IRS is investigating Dallas Police & Fire

**DAVID TAFFET** | Senior Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

The Dallas City Council amended the definition of "spouse" at its Feb. 18 meeting for the purpose of bringing the Employee Retirement Fund into compliance with IRS regulations that went into effect on Jan. 1.

Three council members — Vonciel Jones Hill, Sheffie Kadane and Rick Callahan — voted against the change.

The IRS ruled pension plans that allow pre-tax contributions had to offer equal benefits by the beginning of the year, but could begin the process of changing bylaws, statutes or other legal documents at the first board meeting of the new year.

Dallas council members Lee Kleinman and Carolyn Davis sit on the ERF pension board. The change of wording was a compromise worked out after a five-hour meeting the previous week.

Previous wording read "Spouse means the husband or wife of a member." New wording reads, "Spouse means the person to whom the member, inactive member or retiree is married, as evidenced by the last marriage certificate or declaration of common-law marriage on file with the retirement fund and verified by the fund to be valid in the jurisdiction in which the marriage was celebrated."

Since gays and lesbians have husbands and wives just as straight people have husbands and wives, the wording didn't actually need to be changed. But clarifying the wording to include same-sex couples satisfied the board.

But the debate brought up some of the hypocrisy infusing the issue.

Marriages that were valid in place of celebration were always accepted. In Tennessee, for example, first cousins can marry; in Texas they may not. However, the ERF never questioned the validity of those marriages.

Straight employees never actually had to marry to have benefits apply to their partners, because the fund recognizes common-law marriage with a "de-

■ CITY COUNCIL, Page 7

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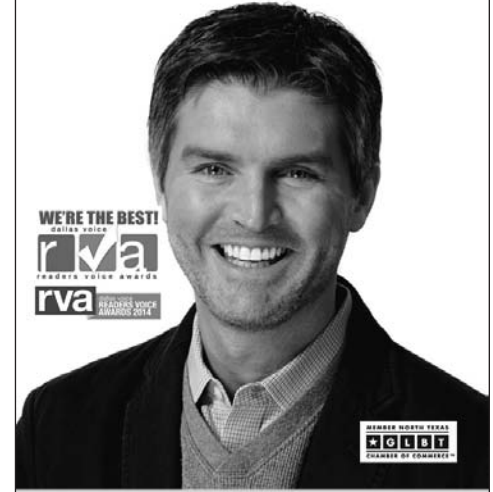
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## localbriefs

### Lakewood UMC celebrates joining Reconciling Ministries with potluck

Lakewood United Methodist Church, 2443 Abrams in Dallas, is hosting a potluck dinner, 6 p.m. on Feb. 22, to celebrate Lakewood UMC's announcement that it has joined the Reconciling Ministries Network, a group of progressive Methodist churches devoted to mobilizing United Methodists of all sexual orientations and gender identities to transform the UMC into a full expression of Christ's inclusive love.

Lakewood UMC is hosting the potluck dinner in conjunction with other reconciling UMCs in the area.

"At Lakewood UMC, we are passionately and intentionally reaching out with Christ's love to welcome and affirm our LGBTQ brothers and sisters," Lakewood Pastor Gayle Landis said.

Lakewood UMC has had a continuous presence in Lakewood for 89 years. It is a multi-generational church dedicated to serving the Lakewood community and beyond in various ministries with children and youth, and people impacted by poverty.

### Dallas Bears Chili Cookoff

Dallas Bears present its 2015 annual Chili Cook-off benefiting Dallas Bears Charities on

Feb. 21 at The Hidden Door, 5025 Bowser St. Set up begins at 3:30 p.m. and tasting at 4 p.m. Judging is at 5 p.m. and awards at 5:30 p.m. Entry is free.

Best Overall Chili will be judged on taste, color, aroma, consistency and aftertaste. Categories include best overall, hottest, best preparation, best tasting, best individual and best group entry.

### Abounding Prosperity, Inc. hosts Chat and Chew

Join Pocahontas Duvall at Chat and Chew 7-9 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 25 at Abounding Prosperity, Inc., 2311 Martin Luther King Blvd. Chat and Chew allows trans women to get together and enjoy sisterhood while achieving their inner goals.

For more information contact Pocahontas at 214-809-3074 or [pduvall@aboundingprosperity.org](mailto:pduvall@aboundingprosperity.org).

### Calendar Launch Party benefits Red

Fit4Life Body Dynamics presents a calendar launch party, 7-9 p.m. on Feb. 21, at ES Collection, 3926 Cedar Springs Road. Proceeds of calendar sales benefit Dallas Red Foundation, which supports the programs of Legacy Counseling Center and Founders Cottage. ■



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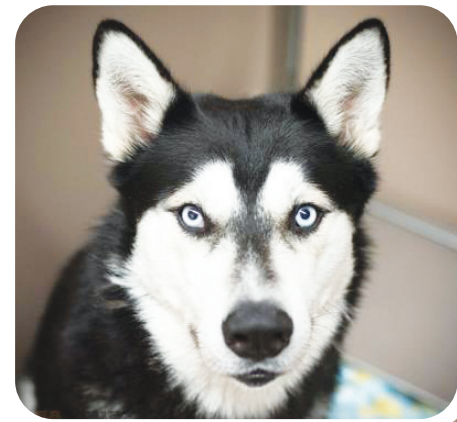
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Kodiak and other pets are available for adoption from Operation Kindness, 3201 Earhart Drive, Carrollton. The no-kill shelter is open six days: Monday, 3-8 p.m.; closed Tuesday; Wednesday, 3-8 p.m.; Thursday, noon-8 p.m.; Friday, noon-5 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon-5 p.m. The cost is \$110 for cats, \$135 for kittens, \$150 for dogs over 1 year, and \$175 for puppies. The cost includes the spay/neuter surgery, microchipping, vaccinations, heartworm test for dogs, leukemia and FIV test for cats, and more. Those who adopt two pets at the same time receive a \$20 discount.



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■ CITY COUNCIL, From Page 5

claration.”

As the city council discussed making the change, Councilwoman Jennifer Gates expressed surprise that common-law marriage was accepted for purposes of pension benefits.

Councilman Sheffie Kadane didn't understand how the IRS ruling could apply when state law clearly precludes recognition of same-sex marriage. City Attorney Warren Ernst tried to explain that a pension is federally chartered and comes under federal regulations, countering Kadane's argument that city could be sued for recognizing same-sex marriages with the fact that the pension could lose its tax-preferred status if they don't.

In his letter to the council, Warren explained the *U.S. v Windsor* decision, but also said the *De Leon v Perry* decision applied as well. In second case, two Texas couples sued the state, resulting in a February 2014 ruling by U.S. District Judge Orlando Garcia striking down Texas' marriage equality ban. Although the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has heard oral arguments in the DeLeon case, Garcia's ruling stands until if and when the appeals court overturns it.

Resource Center Communications and Advocacy Manager Rafael McDonnell sent a 41-page letter to the IRS this week detailing a similar battle going on with another city pension that covers the police and fire departments. That board has refused to come into compliance with the IRS rulings.

McDonnell said he sent minutes from two meetings going back to October, a letter signed by Resource Center CEO Cece Cox, who is an attorney, the February meeting agenda and news coverage of last week's contentious meeting.

Late on Wednesday, Feb. 18, McDonnell received a response from the IRS noting that the agency is actively looking into the situation. A clarification of what the IRS meant by offering equal benefits to all couples is expected.

**Over at the county**

Dallas County employees are covered by the Texas County and District Retirement System.

Spokesman Russ Rhea said the TCDRS is in compliance with the IRS ruling. Information on the website has not been updated, however.

“I checked with the TCDRS folks and they have confirmed that members can designate their legal spouse as their beneficiary regardless of gender,” Rhea said.

While the Dallas ERF and Fort Worth's employee pension plan are in full compliance, few others around the state are.

The Texas Municipal Retirement System, which covers employees in more than 800 cities in Texas, is apparently out of compliance. A press representative of the fund said it hasn't come up.

Others may be “functionally compliant,” meaning they would accept an application for a same-sex spouse, but are not actively changing their policies.

The IRS ruling was clear in stating that pensions must clear up the wording in their regulations and policies, and didn't give funds the luxury of deciding whether they had any married gay or lesbian employees. ■

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# The Strip: Heart of LGBT Dallas

Strong retail, quality dining and a vibrant nightlife keep the pink dollars flowing on Cedar Springs

**DAVID TAFFET** | Senior Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

When *Out Traveler* named Oak Lawn the “best gayborhood in the U.S.,” it said “Oak Lawn is a shining star in a city soaked with money and privilege.” The magazine also noted that Oak Lawn is “packed with nightlife and eateries,” and praised its proximity to downtown and the Design District.

But just what is it that really makes a gayborhood successful and keeps it vibrant?

According to Dallas Tavern Guild Executive Director Michael Doughman, it takes a good mix of retail and restaurants with a concentration of bars in the area. Hospitality, stability, engagement with the surrounding neighborhood, a great hotel and new development that’s integrated into the gayborhood all play into making Oak Lawn an enduring draw for the LGBT community, he said.

Doughman said other gayborhoods he’s visited don’t have the mix of stores, restaurants and bars that Oak Lawn has. He said the publisher of *Sparticus*, the international gay guide, told him that in many cities, he replaces a majority of the listings each year. In Dallas, there are usually just a few updates.

That stability extends to bars, restaurants and shops.

Over the years, Throckmorton Mining Company expanded and then moved, but its roots date to 1978. The Round-Up Saloon and JR.’s Bar & Grill first opened in the early 1980s and Sue Ellen’s has been around — in two locations on The Strip — since the late 1980s.

But that doesn’t mean the bar scene is old and stale. Station 4 is the fourth iteration of that club in its more than three decade history, and Liquid Zoo, Cedar Springs Tap House and Marty’s all opened within the last year.

Doughman credits the Dallas Tavern Guild, an organization of LGBT bar owners, for adding to that stability. Large events like last fall’s Gay Softball World Series street party would not have been possible to coordinate between bars had the tavern guild not existed. He said that by working together, the various bars have each carved out a niche and added to each other’s success.

No other city is organized this way, Doughman said.

Restaurants and retail on Cedar Springs share that same blend of old and new.

Restaurants have a history of success on the strip. The original Black Eyed Pea doubled in size in its current Cedar Springs location before spawning a national chain. When *Hunky’s* established its Oak Cliff location, it signaled the beginning of a new gayborhood on the other side of the Trinity River, where about half of the stores and restaura-



**SHOP STAY DINE PLAY** | The Strip on Cedar Springs was voted best gayborhood because of its mix of bars, retail and restaurants. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

rants in Bishop Arts are gay-owned.

Turning to retail on The Strip, TapeLenders, which opened in 1981, is currently the oldest shop. Today, video rental is only a small part the store’s business, but the store began in a small space where OutLines now stands, renting Beta tapes, before VHS took off. The name is iconic in the neighborhood, even though the merchandise has changed with the times and TapeLenders thrives without a tape in the store.

OutLines and Skivvies are the established clothing stores on the strip. Hoping to buy into that healthy retail environment, Out of the Closet, Flower Reign and Gifted have all opened over the last year.

Dave Richardson, owner of Skivvies and Gifted, said they opened the gift shop after Nuvo moved off the street and that type of store was missing. He said more women started coming into the store from Sue Ellen’s across the street and many wandered into Skivvies as well, buying t-shirts and shorts in numbers they never had before.

Richardson also said it’s important for retailers to keep up with current trends. As the state waits for a final ruling on marriage equality, he’s stocked up items couples will want for their weddings, such as rings, engagement and wedding cards and same-sex cake toppers.

Out of the Closet is operated by AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Texas Regional Director Bret Camp said the store is doing exceptionally well. AHF operates other stores under the same name in other cities where they’re not in the middle of a gayborhood, he said.

“The centralization of the community made it a perfect fit,” Camp said.

In addition to being a resale store, Out of the Closet offers HIV testing. Camp said they’re not competing with Resource Center’s Nelson-Tebedo Clinic right down the street. Some people are more comfortable getting tested in a more clinical setting. Others prefer the retail setting. He said his shop is testing a good mix of gay and straight people, and he thinks overall testing is up in the neighborhood as a result of his store.

Doughman said in addition to all the money raised at all the bars for LGBT and AIDS causes, another element that keeps the gayborhood strong is its community involvement.

Sam Houston Elementary School is located a block behind the bars. Sam Houston is traditionally one of the poorest schools in Dallas Independent School District, so a group of employees at JR.’s decided to brighten Christmas for the students years ago. Each student wrote down a Christmas wish and bar patrons bought the presents that were delivered to the students at the school by Santa. That was the beginning of a tradition that still continues.

That involvement grew into a bigger commitment to the school, with an August school supply drive and a winter coat drive for students that had none when the temperatures plummet.

Other groups have also made commitments to the non-LGBT community in Oak Lawn. Rainbow LULAC organized a school supply drive at the bar Havana for other Oak Lawn-area schools, and Cathedral of Hope planted trees and added an air

conditioning system to its across-the-street neighbor, Maple Lawn Elementary.

Doughman said two anchors also add to the gayborhood — ilume at one end of The Strip and the Melrose Hotel at the other.

The Melrose just began digging its pool and, once the building is completed in a year, plans to open it to the community for events. During the week, the hotel is booked with business travelers, but because of its strategic location, the Melrose remains at high occupancy through the weekend. Parade, Halloween and other special event weekends are booked years in advance.

Doughman said he couldn’t think of another gayborhood with a hotel as nice as the Melrose as part of the mix.

On the other end of The Strip, ilume has welcomed groups to meet in its Great Room since it opened several years ago, and the North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce and Purple Party are officed there.

Richardson said ilume has brought high-end housing with lots of amenities back to The Strip.

Doughman had a bit of advice, or maybe a request, to help keep the gayborhood strong. He said when a board has a meeting or group needs a place to meet, think of meeting in a gayborhood restaurant to help keep the neighborhood vibrant.

The city has so much confidence in the future of The Strip, it’s dedicated more than \$1million in bond money for a beautification project. Plans are being drawn and work should begin by the end of the year. ■



# Married in Texas? Maybe, maybe not

COMPILED BY THE DALLAS VOICE NEWS STAFF

A flurry of legal rulings coming out of state courts in Travis County this week left an Austin lesbian couple with a legal marriage license and a very public wedding ceremony on Thursday morning, Feb. 19.

But by that afternoon, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton had stepped in and gotten the Texas Supreme Court to issue a stay on the nuptials between Sarah Goodfriend and Suzanne Bryant, also ensuring that no other same-sex couples are able to use similar tactics to obtain marriage licenses in Travis County.

In a statement issued early Thursday evening, Paxton said: "The court's action upholds our state constitution and stays these rulings by activist judges in Travis County. The same-sex marriage license issued by the Travis County Clerk is void, just as any license issued in violation of state law would be."

Paxton has pledged to "continue to defend the will of the people of Texas, who have defined marriage as between one man and one woman, against any judicial activism or overreach."

But a Dallas lawyer and former judge offered a different interpretation of the state Supreme Court's stay.

Barbara Rosenberg, who works in the Dallas City Attorney's Office, told Dallas Voice that her understanding is that the ruling can only stop future licenses from being issued.

"The [status of the ] marriage will be determined by the outcome of the cases," she said.

Looming over the proceedings is the possibility of a ruling from the federal Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in another Texas marriage equality lawsuit that could nullify Paxton's maneuvering. And above even that looms a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that is expected

as early as June.

This most recent round of the marriage equality battle started on Tuesday, Feb. 17, when Travis County Probate Judge Guy Herman issued a ruling striking down Texas' ban on legal recognition of same-sex marriage. Herman's ruling came as part of an estate fight between Austin resident Sonemaly Phrasavath and the siblings of her late partner, Stella Powell.

Phrasavath filed suit seeking to have her eight-year relationship with Powell recognized as a common-law marriage, after Powell died without a will last June following an eight-month battle with colon cancer.

Paxton intervened in that case Tuesday after Herman issued his ruling, asking the Texas Supreme Court to first stay and then overturn the ruling.

On Thursday morning, Sept. 19, state District Court Judge David Wahlberg, also in Travis County, ruled in a suit filed by Goodfriend and Bryant who asked the court to order Travis County Clerk Dana DeBeauvoir to issue a marriage license to them, on the condition that they were in a medically fragile situation because of Goodfriend's battle with ovarian cancer.

Wahlberg issued a temporary restraining order instructing DeBeauvoir to issue the license, declaring the marriage ban unconstitutional and waiving the usually-required 72-hour waiting period. That allowed Goodfriend and Bryant to be married immediately, and they did just that in a ceremony performed in front of the clerk's office, officiated by Rabbi Kerry Baker.

Paxton again intervened, asking the state Supreme Court to stay Wahlberg's order and "any state court proceedings that seek to undermine the constitutionality of Texas' marriage law." Paxton asked the court to void Goodfriend's and Bryant's marriage license and is



Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton

filing suit to enjoin the Travis County Clerk from issuing any marriage licenses to any other same-sex couples.

A statement issued Thursday by Paxton's office also noted that the Texas AG has filed a response with the federal Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, opposing a

motion by plaintiffs in *DeLeon v. Texas*, asking that the stay of trial court judge's ruling overturning the Texas marriage ban be lifted immediately, allowing same-sex marriages to begin statewide.

U.S. District Judge Orlando Garcia in San Antonio ruled in February 2014 that the Texas constitutional amendment banning legal recognition of same-sex marriages violates the U.S. Constitution, but issued a stay of his ruling pending appeals.

The Fifth Circuit Court heard oral arguments in that case, along with one case from Louisiana and one from Mississippi, on Jan. 9, and could issue its ruling any day. The U.S. Supreme Court has taken appeals on four marriage equality cases out of the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals — the only federal appellate court to rule against marriage equality since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned portions of the Defense of Marriage Act in June 2013.

The U.S. Supreme Court is expected to hear oral arguments in those cases in April and to issue its ruling sometime in June. That ruling, most pundits agree, is likely to come down in favor of marriage equality, possibly even by a 7-2 margin. ■

## GOT MARRIED? WE CAN HELP!



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Ron Allen, left, David Henderson, right

# Keeping your pink dollars healthy

Planning, good credit are keys to financial success

**JAMES RUSSELL** | Staff Writer  
russell@dallasvoice.com

Achieving financial success means more than having a well-paying job and expendable income. It also requires a lot of responsibility. With the legislative landscape changing for same-sex couples, financial planners are beginning to take no-



tice.

Wells Fargo Advisors was one of the first to seize on the trend. The financial advisory group inaugurated its Accredited Domestic Partnership Advisors designation in 2009 through the College of Certified Financial Planners. Being ADPA certified means that advisor provides same-sex couples, heterosexual couples who are not married

and those in other relationship arrangements with specific financial advice and arrangements they need to maneuver in the changing legal landscape.

Bobby Foster is among those certified by Wells Fargo.

While the IRS recognized same-sex marriages following the 2013 *United States v Windsor* ruling overturning parts of the Defense of Marriage Act, municipalities and other regional entities may not, Foster said. "With the patchwork of current laws, it can be uncertain for some people," he added.

Foster noted the difference among municipalities as close as Dallas and Fort Worth. "I'd craft a different plan with a couple in Fort Worth than in Dallas," he said, noting Fort Worth's recent move to extend benefits to the legal same-sex spouses of employees, "because

as far as city benefits, it matters where you live."

Beside benefits, legacy planning is also another important issue for same-sex couples and domestic partners. "The needs are the same," Foster said, but the lack of legal recognition is another hurdle. If children of parents in same-sex relationships or

■ **HEALTHY**, Page 13

# The financial benefits of marriage

Marriage equality plays a huge role in federal taxes, benefits, health care

**DAVID TAFFET** | Senior Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

The Internal Revenue Service is emerging as the hero of the marriage equality movement.

After the fall of "don't ask, don't tell," the Defense Department allowed gays and lesbians to enlist and service members to serve openly, but it's still debating benefits. Four years after repeal, same-sex couples still don't receive all the benefits opposite-sex couples receive.

But after the *United States v Windsor* decision in June 2013, the IRS moved more quickly. Because the federal government was allowed to recognize same-sex marriage, the agency ruled that couples with a valid marriage license had to file their federal income taxes as a couple — either jointly or as married filing separately.

In addition to its swift ruling just months after *Windsor*, the IRS' additional rulings have all favored recognition of same-sex couples.

As of Jan. 1, 2015, pension funds had to recognize married same-sex couples and offer equal benefits to all married couples. The Dallas Employee Retirement Fund came into compliance this week. Fort Worth's employee pension fund change its policy in January. The Dallas Police and Fire Pension refused to fix its benefit program and is out of compliance, jeop-

ardizing its tax-exempt status.

Fort Worth tax accountant David Mack Henderson, who is also president of Fairness Fort Worth, said that along with the benefits of marriage come responsibilities.

## Taxes

In 2014, getting married became a lot easier for Texans. First neighboring New Mexico began issuing marriage licenses and in October, Oklahoma became a marriage equality state. A couple that's married must file jointly or as married, filing separately.

CPA Ron Allen said that if you get married, "most of the time you're going to pay more" in federal income taxes.

He said the only time to file as married, filing separately is while going through a divorce. That category has the highest tax rates.

Henderson said he advises couples to have an open discussion about their finances before getting married.

"I've never encouraged someone to marry or not get married because of taxes," he said.

Henderson said a couple should get a picture of what the couple is combining. For those with more complicated finances, sit down with a financial planner before getting married to understand the consequences.

He said it's important to do this before marriage because, "there are some things you can't undo."

■ **MARRIAGE**, Page 13

# The Corporate Equality Index

Looking for other ways to utilize your pink dollar? Unsure if you're doing business with an LGBT-friendly institution? Here are some resources to check out:

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Corporate Equality Index is billed as "the national benchmarking tool on corporate policies and practices pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees." In the 2015 CEI report, 366 major businesses spanning industries across the country earned a top score of 100 percent and the distinction of "Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality." Numerous banking and financial giants received one hundred percent, including Dallas-based Comerica.

The 2015 Index is available online at [Hrc.org/campaigns/corporate-equality-index](http://Hrc.org/campaigns/corporate-equality-index).

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates is one of the world's leading nonprofit organizations dedicated to achieving LGBT workplace equality. They have worked with executives, human resources professionals and Employee Resource Groups from Fortune 1000 companies to provide leadership and professional development, education and research.

They also host an annual Workplace Summit, which will be held this year Oct. 5-8 in Dallas. The summit allows employees and experts to share strategies and best practices to create workplace

equality, inclusive of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions.

More information is available at [Outandequal.org](http://Outandequal.org).

Freedom to Work, like Out & Equal, is a national organization dedicated to protecting LGBT people from workplace harassment and career discrimination through public education, policy analysis, and legal work. They have filed groundbreaking suits, including against Irving-based ExxonMobil, alleging the corporation violated Illinois' LGBT nondiscrimination law. To track the latest legislation and information on LGBT workplace equality, check out [Freedomtowork.org](http://Freedomtowork.org).

# Hundreds converge on Austin for Faith Advocacy Day

Even the staffs of anti-gay Republicans were friendly, participants say

**JAMES RUSSELL** | Staff Writer  
russell@dallasvoice.com

Neither Senate Bill 343 nor House Joint Resolution 10 nor Rep. Molly White could prevent hundreds of members of Texas' faith community from descending upon the state Capitol on Tuesday, Feb. 17, for Faith Advocacy Day. The daylong lobbying event sponsored by Equality Texas and Texas Freedom Network brought people of faith from across the state to Austin advocate for LGBT equality.

At a rally on the Capitol steps before the event, LGBT and allied clergy emphasized the need for people of faith to advocate for LGBT issues and urged attendees to visit [TexasBelieves.org](http://TexasBelieves.org) to sign up in support of LGBT equality and against discriminatory laws.

The Rev. Eric Folkerth of Northaven United Methodist Church in Dallas was among them. He stressed the importance of ending discrimination in the LGBT community.

"The idea that any [LGBT people] might be discriminated against under state or local laws is absolutely unacceptable," Folkerth said. "Not only is this unacceptable to me as a minister of the Gospel, but it's unacceptable to straight members of my congregation, who cannot fathom why any community in Texas would discriminate against LGBT people."

United Church of Christ minister Leslie Jackson of Houston advocated for marriage equality and against employment and housing discrimination. "Surely all of our diverse faith traditions and differing beliefs can come together around this simple value: having a roof over your head and keeping a job should not be based on what you look like or who you love," Jackson said.

Despite the Republican dominance of the Texas Legislature, those participating in the lobby day said staff members of even the most virulently anti-LGBT rights legislators were friendly and receptive.

Lila Belitz, who attends Oak Cliff Unitarian Universalist Church, said she was impressed by the warm reception from staff members on her first visit. Even though she was not able to personally meet with legislators, the staff members she met were "open and respectful. It was a really great experience for my first time," Belitz said.

Todd Whitley, Equality Texas' communications manager, was also attending the event for his first

time. He said the group's distinct message was pivotal to its success, especially with more conservative Republicans. "We talked about [LGBT issues] from a faith perspective," a message both uncommon yet appealing to legislators, Whitley said.

Whitley pointed to the legislative staff of Rep. Jason Villalba, a Dallas Republican who filed House Joint Resolution 55 that would gut local nondiscrimination ordinances. He said they were engaging and interested in constituents' concerns.



Among them is HB 130 by Rep. Rafael Anchia, D-Dallas, one of four bills that would repeal the state's ban on marriage equality.

Rep. Chris Turner, D-Arlington, filed HB 582, which would prevent state contractors from discriminating against employees based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Worth, Jonathan Stickland of Bedford, Bill Zedler of Arlington, Matt Rinaldi of Irving, and the entire Collin County House delegation.

In the Senate, HB 343 by Sen. Don Huffines, R-Dallas, would repeal local nondiscrimination ordinances. Despite that bill, Whitley said, the Faith Advocacy Day delegations found



**TESTING FAITH** | The Rev. Colleen Darraugh and Todd Whitley pause for a photo outside Sen. Don Huffines' office (top). Members of the Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry pause for prayer. (James Russell/Dallas Voice)

When the group pressed on HJR 55, Whitley said the staff insisted the bill was "not what he intended."

Villalba has stated before the bill is about re-iterating religious freedom protections.

As of press time, Democratic lawmakers have filed 14 bills addressing bullying, discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and marriage equality for same-sex couples.

But Texas' LGBT community still faces many hurdles in the Legislature. HB 623, filed by Rep. Cecil Bell, R-Magnolia, would strip salary and benefits from any state employee who complies with any future court decision overturning the state's ban on same-sex marriage. The bill currently has the backing of 40 legislators, all Republicans. Among the local sponsors are Reps. Stephanie Klick and Matt Krause, both of Fort

Huffines' staff receptive as well. As soon as Whitley and his group left the senator's office, he received a friendly e-mail thanking them for stopping by.

Huffines' staff should anticipate sending more emails in the days to come. Equality Texas hosts Family Advocacy Day on March 23 and Freedom Advocacy Day on April 13. ■

More information is available at [EqualityTexas.org](http://EqualityTexas.org).



# THE GAY AGENDA

FEBRUARY

• **Feb. 20: Hope 4 Peace and Justice's 2015 World Day of Social Justice: "I'm Queer and I Care"**

Gather with local social justice activists at H4PJ's annual celebration of social justice at 5:30 p.m. at the Legacy of Love monument at the intersection of Cedar Springs and Oak Lawn. For more information contact Todd Whitley at 214-351-1901 or todd@H4PJ.org.

• **Feb. 21: Stonewall Democrats of Tarrant County Strategic Retreat**

• **Feb. 21: Gaybingo: Gilligan's Island**  
Monthly fundraiser for Resource Center takes place 6-9 p.m. at Rose Room at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Rd. Doors open at 5 p.m. For more information call 214-540-4495 or e-mail Gaybingo@myresourcecenter.org.

• **Feb. 21: GEAR Voice Feminization Support Group**  
Monthly meeting to study and practice voice feminization training. Free, but seating is limited to 30. 2-4 p.m. at Resource Center, 2701 Reagan St. For more information call 214-528-0144 or e-mail gear@myresourcecenter.org.

• **Feb. 21: Chi Tau Epsilon Dance Honor Society Benefit Concert**  
Texas Christian University's Chi Tau Epsilon Dance Honor Society hosts their annual benefit concert for AIDS Outreach Center at 7:30 p.m. at Studio Theatre at Erma Lowe Hall, 3000 South University Dr., Fort Worth. Call 817-257-4255 for ticket information.

• **Feb. 21: Dallas-Fort Worth Gay for Good Volunteer Project**  
DFW Gay For Good's Habitat for Humanity volunteer project from 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at 2606 Wilhurt. Arrive between 7:45-8 a.m. Register at Bit.ly/DFWG4G21. Contact Rob Peters at robpeters70@gmail.com or 781-472-0745 for more information.

• **Feb. 21: Miss Gay Texas Pageant System's Miss Tri City State and State-at-Large Pageant**  
The system that promotes both female impersonation and community support holds a themed pageant and fundraiser to benefit AIDS Arms Life Walk. Categories include presentation, performance and more. Male interviews begin at 2 p.m. and show begins at 8 p.m. at Garlow's, 308 E. Main Street, Gun Barrel City. \$75 entry fee. Contact Sable Alexander at sablelindsey@aol.com.

• **Feb. 21: Fit4Life Calendar Launch Party: Benefiting Dallas Red Foundation**  
Fit4Life 2015 calendar launch benefitting the Dallas Red Foundation and HIV/AIDS research 7-9 p.m. at ES Collection, 3926 Cedar Springs. Complimentary cocktails. More information at On.fb.me/1zbd742.

• **Feb. 22: He Said/She Said**  
The Human Rights Campaign Dallas Fort Worth presents the inaugural He Said/She Said fundraiser, a new twist on the Her HRC event. Events include trivia with cash prizes, HRC Bachelorette and/or Bachelor live auction and a drag show to cap off the day. Cassie Nova and Jenna Skyy host. 2 p.m. at Sue Ellen's.

• **Feb. 26: Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin screening**  
Stonewall Democrats of Denton County present a screening of a documentary about the black gay civil rights activist 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Landmark Grill, 1297 Justin Rd/FM 407, Lewisville.

• **Feb. 26: GEAR Monthly Mixer**  
Make new friends and learn about GEAR and Resource Center 6-8 p.m. at La Madeleine, 3906 Lemmon Ave. For more information and to R.S.V.P. call 214-528-0144 or email gear@myresourcecenter.org.

• **Feb. 26: Bloomin' Ball Launch Party: Sowing Seeds of Hope**  
Texas Instruments fundraiser benefits AIDS

Interfaith Network 6:30-8 p.m. at The Tower Club of Dallas, 48 Thanksgiving Tower, 1601 Elm Street. Includes complimentary beers, wine and hors d'oeuvres and desserts. \$5 self parking after 5 p.m. More information and to RSVP e-mail Bporter@aidsinterfaithnetwork.org.

• **Feb. 28: 17th Annual Toast to Life: Voodoo on the Trinity**  
What do you get when you mix a bunny with magic? You get "Voodoo on the Trinity," the theme of Resource Center's annual Toast To Life fundraiser. DJ Lady Bunny will provide entertainment. The fundraiser begins 7 p.m. at The Empire Room, 1225 N Riverfront Blvd. For more information, visit Bit.ly/1BUUp2w.

• **Feb. 28-March 1: Denton Church Celebrates African American History Month**  
St. James AME honors the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and 150th year of Juneteenth on Saturday and Sunday with a health fair 11 a.m.-3 p.m. on Saturday and celebration with music and more from 3-5 p.m. on Sunday at St. James AME, at 1107 E. Oak St., Denton. For more information call 940-387-1223 or e-mail stjamesamedenton@gmail.com.

## MARCH

• **March 5: Resource Center Volunteer Orientation**  
Mandatory volunteer orientation 9:45 a.m.- 1 p.m. at Resource Center, 2701 Reagan St. For more information and to register call 214-528-0144 or visit the Resource Center.

• **March 7: 25th Anniversary of House DIFFA Celebration**  
DIFFA/Dallas celebrates the 25th anniversary of its House of DIFFA black tie fundraiser benefitting numerous North Texas AIDS service organizations. Silent/live auction, seated dinner and fashion runway show begins at 6 p.m. at the Omni Hotel Downtown Dallas, 555 S. Lamar St. Ticket prices vary and

are available at Bit.ly/1ID2U2Y. For more information visit Diffadallas.org.

• **March 7: Stonewall Democrats Candidate and Endorsement Screening**  
Takes place 9 a.m.-4 p.m. upstairs at Sue Ellen's. Open to the public but membership must be current or renewed at least 30 days prior in order to participate with the Endorsement Committee. 30-day deadline is Thursday, Feb. 5th. Visit Stonewalldemocratsofdallas.org for more information.

• **March 11: GEAR: Trans\*men Community Session**  
Monthly meeting discussion topics relating to masculine gender identity and transitioning. 6-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 2701 Reagan St.

• **March 12-15: TBRU 20 - Bear On Studio 54: Return to the Discotheque**  
Annual Texas Bear Round Up gathering at Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7050 N Stemmons Freeway. Call 682-231-2624 or email customerservice@tbru.org for more information. Register online at Tbru.org/?page\_id=12.

• **March 12: TBRU 20 Bears BearDance**  
Texas Bear Round Up hosts fundraiser for HIV/AIDS organizations 8 p.m.-4 a.m. at Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs. \$25 advanced tickets or \$35 at the door. Register online at Tbru.org/?page\_id=12.

• **March 13-14: End with Red: A Time for Solidarity**  
The Afiya Center's second annual weekend fundraiser and symposium on the reproductive justice movement includes dinner with a presentation by guest speaker Byllye Avery at 6 p.m. on Friday. Faith-based roundtable discussion on the church's position on women's issues such as HIV/AIDS at 9 a.m. Both events at Academy of Black Arts and Letters, 1309 Canton Rd. Register online at Bit.ly/1z8d8Rq.

• **March 14: #NOH8Worldwide open photo shoot**  
Photo shoot with Adam Bouska benefitting NO8 campaign. 2-5 p.m. at Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, 14115 Hillcrest Road. Single/Solo Photos: \$40. Couple/Group Photos: \$25 per person. Cash and credit cards only. More information at Noh8campaign.com.

• **March 17: JEWEL Lesbian Fiction Book Club**  
Monthly book club discussion open to all women 7-9 p.m. at ilume, 4123 Cedar Springs Rd. Free. For more information e-mail jewel@myresourcecenter.org.



**SPOTLIGHT:**

## Screening of *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin*

Bayard Rustin was a civil rights activist and organizer for the majority of his life. But the black gay Quaker is often overlooked amidst the movement's other leading figures, in part because of his sexual orientation.

Local audiences have a chance to learn about Rustin's life and struggles when Stonewall Democrats of Denton County screens *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin* at their monthly meeting, 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 26 at Landmark Grill, 1297 Justin Rd/FM 407 in Lewisville.

The 2003 documentary produced by Nancy Kates, Sam Pollard and Bennett Singer, culls from rare archival footage and interviews to paint a picture of a man committed to social change and nonviolence, who was often found at the margins of his own movement. Rustin died in 1987. He was posthumously awarded the 2013 Presidential Medal of Freedom, which his longtime partner Walter Naegle received on his behalf.

But it took efforts like the 2003 documentary to get him the recognition he deserves.





## HEALTHY, From Page 10

partnerships are not recognized then advisors must also know how to navigate those complex legal hurdles.

Regardless of sexual orientation or legal recognition, Foster said there are a few questions everyone should ask: Are we planning for the future? How do we plan for our retirement?

However the Supreme Court rules in the pending marriage equality cases before them, he said, "We're ready to serve regardless of the outcome."

Do you know your credit score? If not, you might want to check it before planning your financial future, suggested Zayn Aguilar, vice president of business development and managing director of Dallas-based CreditHeroes.com. A good credit score — usually around 700-plus — may make the difference between financing a home with a high or low interest.

CreditHeroes.com, the queer-owned consumer advocacy group, helps consumers repair their credit while educating them about financial success. Doubling as educators and financial advisors, they work with lending partners and banks to help people achieve their goals, Aguilar said.

Aguilar insisted that the group isn't your run-of-the-mill, shady credit repair group you see on billboards. They meet with clients personally to craft a plan about not just restoring credit, but tracking a financial future. Unlike other credit repair groups, CreditHeroes.com focuses on the middle class. And unlike other groups, who may sometimes be "one guy sitting in his living room," Credit Heroes provides financial consulting services, for free. "Credit restoration is a way to build trust," Aguilar said.

Another key constituency is the LGBT community. Though legislation such as the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 protects consumers, oftentimes that legislation is generalized. It may miss specific issues facing the LGBT community. Aguilar cited homeowner's insurance as an example: "If you're not on the deed, then your items are not covered if there's an accident."

Even as legislation begins to benefit the LGBT community, everyone still needs to know their credit score.

On the road to financial planning, it may be best to start with learning about how to successfully watch and manage a good credit rating. ■

## MARRIAGE, From Page 10

Some actions may be better to take before marriage.

### Social Security

For the purpose of Social Security and Medicare benefits, place of residence is written into the law rather than place of celebration.

When a spouse who earned higher social security benefits dies, the survivor is eligible to continue to receive that higher amount, Allen said.

Applications from same-sex couples in states with discriminatory marriage laws are currently being placed on hold until the Supreme Court rules on marriage equality. If the Supreme Court rules that all states must allow same-sex couples to marry, those applications will be processed.

### Inheritance

The *Windsor* case was about inheritance tax. "There's a huge advantage to being married if there's a large estate," Allen said.

### Parkland and ADAP

If one spouse gets HIV meds at Parkland or AIDS Arms through the federal AIDS Drug Assistance Program or ADAP, check to see if combining incomes through marriage will affect receiving benefits, Allen advised.

Federal programs generally treat marriage by place of celebration, so income should be reported as a couple if already married out-of-state. ■

Because of the change in income, the spouse that had been relying on Parkland because Texas didn't expand Medicaid coverage may now qualify for insurance. Not purchasing a policy may result in a penalty.

### Affordable Care Act

Beginning this year, uninsured individuals pay a penalty under the Affordable Care Act. In states like Texas that did not expand Medicaid, those with low incomes may qualify for an exemption, according to information on healthcare.gov.

The penalty is paid either as a flat fee or a percentage of income, whichever is higher.

If uninsured for more than three months but not the entire year, pay 1/12 of the penalty per month uninsured.

The flat fee for having no coverage in 2014 is \$95 per adult and \$47.50 per child with a maximum of \$285 per family.

Households with higher income pay 1 percent of household income. The maximum penalty is the national average premium for a bronze plan. According to IRS.gov, that amount is \$2,448 per person up to \$12,240 for a family of five or more.

On 2015 taxes, the amount increases. The flat fee will be \$325 for an adult and \$162.50 per child up to a family total of \$975.

The percentage of income increases to 2 percent with a cap of the national average of a bronze plan.

After this year, the flat fee increases to \$695 per person or 2.5 percent of income.

The fee is paid on the federal income tax return for the year without coverage. ■

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**Ask your healthcare provider if COMPLERA may be the one for you.**

Pill shown is not actual size.

## COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.

To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

It is not known if COMPLERA is safe and effective in children under 18 years old.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

### What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

COMPLERA can cause serious side effects:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis)**, which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking COMPLERA, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

### Who should not take COMPLERA?

Do not take COMPLERA if you:

- **Take a medicine that contains:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (EpiVir-HBV), carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Epitol), oxcarbazepine (Trileptal), phenobarbital (Luminal), phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek), rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin), rifapentine (Priftin), dexamethasone (Dexilant), esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo), lansoprazole (Prevacid), omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid), pantoprazole sodium (Protonix), rabeprazole (Aciphex), more than 1 dose of the steroid medicine dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate, or the herbal supplement St. John’s wort.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection**, unless recommended by your healthcare provider.

### What are the other possible side effects of COMPLERA?

Serious side effects of COMPLERA may also include:

- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood tests to check your kidneys before starting treatment with COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems, or take other medicines that may cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may also check your kidneys during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Depression or mood changes.** Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms: feeling sad or hopeless, feeling anxious or restless, have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself.

- **Changes in liver enzymes:** People who have had hepatitis B or C, or who have had changes in their liver function tests in the past may have an increased risk for liver problems while taking COMPLERA. Some people without prior liver disease may also be at risk. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Bone problems**, including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking COMPLERA.

The most common side effects of COMPLERA include trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, and depression. Other common side effects include vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), and pain. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take**, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take rifabutin (Mycobutin).** Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA.
- **If you take stomach acid blockers.** Take acid blockers at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if your acid blocker is okay to take, as some acid blockers should never be taken with COMPLERA.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking COMPLERA.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in COMPLERA can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with important warnings on the following pages.



**COMPLERA**<sup>®</sup>  
emtricitabine 200mg/rilpivirine 25mg/  
tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets

## Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information

### COMPLERA® (kom-PLUH-rah)

(emtricitabine 200 mg, rilpivirine 25 mg, tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

#### What is COMPLERA?

- **COMPLERA** is a prescription medicine used as a complete HIV-1 treatment in one pill a day. COMPLERA is for adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before and who have no more than 100,000 copies/mL of virus in their blood (this is called 'viral load'). Complera can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements.
- COMPLERA is a complete regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines. HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS. When used properly, COMPLERA may reduce the amount of HIV-1 virus in your blood and increase the amount of CD4 T-cells, which may help improve your immune system. This may reduce your risk of death or getting infections that can happen when your immune system is weak.
- **COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

#### What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

##### COMPLERA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take COMPLERA or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**
  - feel very weak or tired
  - have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
  - have trouble breathing
  - having stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
  - feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
  - feel dizzy or lightheaded
  - have a fast or irregular heartbeat
- **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take COMPLERA. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**
  - your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
  - dark "tea-colored" urine
  - light-colored bowel movements (stools)
  - loss of appetite for several days or longer
  - nausea
  - stomach pain
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time.**

- **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take COMPLERA, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking COMPLERA. A "flare-up" is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV, so you must discuss your HBV with your healthcare provider.

- Do not run out of COMPLERA. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your COMPLERA is all gone.
- Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider.
- If you stop taking COMPLERA, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking COMPLERA.

#### Who should not take COMPLERA?

##### Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any of the following medicines:

- **Medicines used for seizures:** carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Eptol); oxcarbazepine (Trileptal); phenobarbital (Luminal); phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek)
- **Medicines used for tuberculosis:** rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin); rifapentine (Priftin)
- **Certain medicines used to block stomach acid called proton pump inhibitors (PPIs):** dexlansoprazole (Dexilant); esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo); lansoprazole (Prevacid); omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid); pantoprazole sodium (Protonix); rabeprazole (Aciphex)
- **Certain steroid medicines:** More than 1 dose of dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate
- **Certain herbal supplements:** St. John's wort
- **Certain hepatitis medicines:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (EpiVir-HBV)

##### Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain tenofovir (ATRIPLA, STRIBILD, TRUVADA, VIREAD)
- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine or lamivudine (ATRIPLA, Combivir, EMTRIVA, EpiVir, Epzicom, STRIBILD, Trizivir, TRUVADA)
- rilpivirine (Eduvant), unless you are taking rifabutin (Mycobutin)

**COMPLERA is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.**

#### What are the possible side effects of COMPLERA?

##### COMPLERA may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See "What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?"**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems in the past or need to take another medicine that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may need to do blood tests to check your kidneys during your treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Depression or mood changes. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:**
  - feeling sad or hopeless
  - feeling anxious or restless
  - have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself
- **Change in liver enzymes.** People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus infection or who have certain liver enzyme changes may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening liver problems during treatment with COMPLERA. Liver problems can also happen during treatment with COMPLERA in people without a history of liver disease. Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.



- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effect of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.

**The most common side effects of COMPLERA include:**

- Trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, depression

**Additional common side effects include:**

- Vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), pain

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.**

- These are not all the possible side effects of COMPLERA. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?**

**Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:**

- If you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn child.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk to your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take COMPLERA.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in COMPLERA can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if this could harm your baby.
  - Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:**

- COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works.
- If you take certain medicines with COMPLERA, the amount of COMPLERA in your body may be too low and it may not work to help control your HIV-1 infection. The HIV-1 virus in your body may become resistant to COMPLERA or other HIV-1 medicines that are like it.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Rifabutin (Mycobutin), a medicine to treat some bacterial infections. Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.

- Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids **at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA.
- Certain medicines to block the acid in your stomach, including cimetidine (Tagamet), famotidine (Pepcid), nizatidine (Axid), or ranitidine hydrochloride (Zantac). Take the acid blocker **at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA. Some acid blocking medicines should never be taken with COMPLERA (see “Who should not take COMPLERA?” for a list of these medicines).
- Medicines that can affect how your kidneys work, including acyclovir (Zovirax), cidofovir (Vistide), ganciclovir (Cytovene IV, Vitrasert), valganciclovir (Valcyte), and valganciclovir (Valcyte).
- clarithromycin (Biaxin)
- erythromycin (E-Mycin, Eryc, Ery-Tab, PCE, Pediazole, Ilosone)
- fluconazole (Diflucan)
- itraconazole (Sporanox)
- ketoconazole (Nizoral)
- methadone (Dolophine)
- posaconazole (Noxafil)
- telithromycin (Ketek)
- voriconazole (Vfend)

**Know the medicines you take.** Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.

**How should I take COMPLERA?**

- Stay under the care of your healthcare provider during treatment with COMPLERA.
- Take COMPLERA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it.
- Always take COMPLERA with food. Taking COMPLERA with food is important to help get the right amount of medicine in your body. A protein drink is not a substitute for food. If your healthcare provider decides to stop COMPLERA and you are switched to new medicines to treat HIV-1 that includes rilpivirine tablets, the rilpivirine tablets should be taken only with a meal.

**Keep COMPLERA and all medicines out of reach of children.**

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about COMPLERA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about COMPLERA that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to [www.COMPLERA.com](http://www.COMPLERA.com).

Issued: September 2014



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# Missy's tale

One stray has been saved, but many more are out there suffering because people do not spay or neuter their pets

A first-hand lesson in animal rescue might be what some people need to convince them of the desperate need for neutering and spaying household pets. A little heartbreak could go a long way toward enlightenment.

I got the message a long time ago, but a recent event gave me a refresher course in the need for responsible pet ownership. I experienced up close what animal shelter staff and rescue group volunteers go through daily.

Driving down the road recently, I noticed a small, black poodle-type dog running aimlessly on the grass. A broken tether hung from an old collar on her neck, so I stopped to check her out. She wore no tags to identify her, and the matted, filthy coat told me what else I needed to know: She was a stray.

When I called to her, she ran up to me immediately. The look in her eyes told me she desperately needed human kindness, so I picked her up. She



weighed less than 10 pounds, and I couldn't imagine how such a tiny creature managed to survive during the winter in a rural area known for wild animals.

I made my first stop at the veterinarian clinic I use on Cedar Creek Lake to learn if her former owners had given her a microchip for identification purposes. They had not.

The receptionist asked me, "What are you going to do?" I said I would take her home, clean her up and try to find someone to adopt her. That seemed like the best plan because I already had two dogs waiting at home for me.

Unfortunately, that night after I clipped of the matted hair and bathed her, I discovered she had other problems: no control over her bladder and a horrific odor that would not wash away. So the next day I returned to the veterinarian who diagnosed the problem as a lemon-sized stone filling her bladder and expanding it beyond normal size. She needed expensive emergency surgery to have a chance to live.

Had animal control picked her up and taken her to an animal shelter, she wouldn't be here today.

The stray animal overpopulation nationwide forces many shelters to put sick animals down, although some are strictly no-kill operations. Healthy animals that do not get adopted after a certain amount of time also often never make it out of shelters.

I knew I couldn't let that happen to the sweet little dog gazing at me so intently on the examining table. I reluctantly made the decision to pay for her surgery, name her "Missy" and add her to my household when she recovered.



**David Webb**  
The Rare Reporter

bladder, her owners put her outside rather than taking her to the veterinarian. Who knows how long she ran the streets, dragging that broken tether behind her, before I found her. She obviously had at least one litter of puppies at some point in her life.

Thanks to the generosity of several Facebook friends who offered to help, I am not bearing the whole cost of Missy's surgery myself. Lisa Jones, the veterinarian, also gave me a break on the bladder stone and spaying surgery, but it still topped \$500.

When I posted on Facebook about my experience with Missy, Donny Shubert, the president of the Humane Society of Cedar Creek Lake, shared my post on his page and sent me a message: "Now you know how everyone associated with the shelter feels about these poor abandoned animals times a hundred! Thanks so much for sharing."

I never doubted the sincerity of the people who run animal shelters and rescue groups, but the experience did give me a much better understanding of how overwhelming such a task would be.

Every year, 3.9 million dogs and 3.4 million cats enter animal shelters, and of those, 1.2 million dogs and 1.3 million cats are euthanized, according to the Humane Society of the United States. Of dogs entering shelters, 35 percent are adopted, 31 percent are euthanized and 26 percent are returned to owners. Of the cats, 37 percent are adopted, 41 percent are euthanized and less than 5 percent get returned to owners.

Only 10 percent of animals entering shelters are neutered.

For fertile animals, the average number of dog litters is one a year, with four to six puppies per litter. The average number of cat litters is one to two per year, with four to six kittens per litter. There are no reliable statistics for the number of stray household pets in the nation, according to the organization.

There are about 13,600 animal shelters nationwide, but that's not nearly enough to take care of the burgeoning stray animal population. Entire litters of sick puppies and kittens often get euthanized.

The most common excuse for someone refusing to neuter or spay a pet is that they consider it "cruel." The truth is that dogs and cats quickly recover from the surgery, and they do experience the frustrations of sexual impulses.

The cost of spaying and neutering is less than the cost of raising puppies or kittens for one year. Everything considered, the only sensible solution to the stray animal population is neutering and spaying. No one who truly loves animals ever wants to put one down. ■

*David Webb is a veteran journalist with more than three decades of experience, including a stint as a staff reporter for Dallas Voice. He now lives on Cedar Creek Lake and writes for publications nationwide.*

# Running scared?

What is it about the trans community that scares elected officials so much that they have to make laws against us?

**H**as the right wing completely taken leave of their senses? Or are they just running scared?

A bill introduced by Arizona state Sen. John Kavannah, if passed, would have serious consequences for transgender people and their families. Arizona Senate Bill 1045, dubbed “no loo for you” by local residents, would permit business owners to restrict access to gender-specific facilities based on a person’s gender identity or gender expression.

(Just how do they propose to enforce this silly law?)

Does that sound eerily similar to the (un)equal rights ordinance passed by the Plano City Council last December? Well, it is.

On Feb. 9, the Arkansas Senate passed legislation that would stop cities and towns from enacting local ordinances that would protect LGBT communities from discrimination. Senate Bill 202 prevents good faith efforts by local cities seeking to protect some of the most vulnerable members of their communities. (Similar bills have been filed in other states, including Texas.)

Meanwhile, an effort is afoot to cement Kentucky’s place as a backwards and bigoted hillbilly heaven: state Sen. C.B. Embry Jr. introduced the “Kentucky Student Privacy Act,” which would allow students to sue the school for \$2,500 if they encounter a person of the opposite biological sex in a bathroom or locker room, and if staff have allowed for it to happen or failed to prohibit it.

According to Senate Bill 76, “Biological sex means the physical condition of being male or female, which is determined by a person’s chromosomes, and is identified at birth by a person’s anatomy.” (Yeah? Who checks?)

What these legislators are saying is that they want to use the same restroom as transgender women.

What on earth for? Do they want to peek at us? Molest us? What possible fascination could they possibly have with us? Can’t they just let us use the ladies room as we have been doing for years without incident?

I think being forced to pee next to fear-mongering bigots is offensive and dangerous. They are clearly irrational and not of sound mind.

Governments throughout history have justified violence against minorities by demonizing them. Making them the enemy. Ginning up fear among the masses in order to justify violence and oppression. That’s what’s happening now.

Maybe I can settle down some of the panic and put some fears to rest. As a trans woman, I’ve been using ladies rooms all over the country for the last few years and never once have I felt the need to attack someone in the restroom. Matter of fact, I’ve



**Leslie McMurray**  
Contributing Columnist

While it’s easy to find stories spreading fear about transpeople, it’s near impossible to find one about us misbehaving in the bathroom. It just doesn’t happen. If anyone is in danger in a restroom, it is us!

Let me explain:

Most trans men I know are smaller of frame than most cisgender men. Yet due to testosterone, they do a really good job of passing as the guys that they are. Forcing them to use the ladies room is ridiculous. It would likely cause fear and confusion there.

Same with forcing trans women to use the men’s room; it’s a recipe for disaster. It is a very real physical danger for many in our community.

Lastly, none of this is even necessary. These bigots are attempting to solve a problem that just doesn’t exist.

Try and find examples of women being attacked in a women’s room by trans women. Good luck with that. It just doesn’t happen.

The Los Angeles Unified School District — the second-largest school district in terms of number of students in the country — has had a policy in place for many years permitting students to use the restroom that matches their gender identity, and they report no problems arising from this. There may be other problems in Los Angeles, but this isn’t one of them.

Let’s face it, the battle for marriage equality is essentially over. (My guess is that the court will vote 7-2 in favor with Scalia and Thomas dissenting.) And that leaves the fright wing in need of an enemy. The trans community is an easy target.

As the little “t” at the end of “LGBT” we are routinely abandoned by the LGB when expedient. We need look no further than the sell-out by Equality Texas and GALA over the LGB-friendly but trans-exclusionary ordinance in Plano.

More and more, we are on our own.

I don’t know what it is about the trans community that is so scary. But evidently, we are able to frighten some of the most powerful elected officials into enacting laws that keep us from peeing.

We seem to be alone in this fight. Let’s not allow them to keep us from giving a shit. ■

*Leslie McMurray, a transgender woman, is a former radio DJ who lives and works in Dallas. Read more of her blogs at [lesliemichelle44.wordpress.com](http://lesliemichelle44.wordpress.com).*

never had a hint of a problem. I go in; I close the stall door, I pee (or No. 2), I clean up, and I go wash up, maybe run a brush through my hair or fix my make-up and I leave.

Not much drama there. I can’t imagine what these legislators think is going on there.



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**GAYSIAN APPEAL** | Jitin Hingorani and Tanveer Rahman hope to expose South Asians in DFW to LGBT issues in their new film fest. (Terry Thompson/Dallas Voice)



# South Asians (for reel)

There's more diversity to Indian cinema than colorful Bollywood musicals, as the new, gay-run South Asian Film Festival is out to prove

**ARNOLD WAYNE JONES** | Executive Editor  
jones@dallasvoice.com

If you mention Indian filmmaking to someone familiar with world cinema, he would probably immediately think Bollywood — splashy, colorful, light-hearted musicals with handsome men, pretty women and a happy ending. But there's much more to South Asian filmmaking — to South Asian culture — than what you can see every weekend at a multiplex. Indeed, the diversity would probably surprise most South Asians, as well.

"There's lots of cinema verite and independent filmmaking coming out of South Asia, [dealing with] issues like human sex trafficking, or an artists' colony being destroyed by the government — things I didn't know about until I saw these films," says Jitin Hingorani. And that's one of the reasons he founded the DFW South Asian Film Festival, which has its inaugural three-day run at the Angelika Plano next week.

"Dallas is the fifth largest media market in the country and the only one without a festival targeting South Asians — those from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka — specifically," Hingorani says. We're not showing a single Bollywood film — that's on purpose. Many of these films have never seen the light of

day — all either Texas, U.S. or world premieres. But at the end of the day, these are the true stories of South Asian lives."

Accordingly, they span a spectrum, from family programming to women's programming, and, perhaps most surprisingly for a fledgling film fest, LGBT issues. Indeed, much of that diversity is represented on the film fest's advisory board itself: of the 18 members, four are gay men, and two of these — Hingorani and Tanveer Rahman — from South Asia themselves.

"I assure you that was not intentional, but we definitely have people I found synergy with and who have been supportive," Hingorani says. "I reached out to Tanveer not because he's gay, but because he's a friend and so involved in marketing a media. And my partner Patrick [came on board] because he's a complete Indophile since we met."

Still, both men admit that breaking the barrier of showcasing gay issues in the South Asian community requires effort.

"They shy away from it," Rahman concedes, "but it was very important in our thinking process [to include LGBT programming] because our community *hasn't* embraced it as much as the mainstream community. It is a really an issue we have to reach out to."

Two LGBT films will be screened at the festival, as a single program: The short documentary *The Asian Pride Project*, immediately

#### SOUTH ASIAN FILM FEST

Angelika Plano, 7205 Bishop Road,  
Plano. Feb. 27–March 1. \$15–\$120  
(festival pass). DFWSAFF.com.

followed by *Fire in the Blood*, a feature-length documentary about HIV/AIDS told through the story of an Indian man who is HIV-positive.

"We picked these films because they have such amazing stories to tell," Hingorani says. "We want [the Asian community] to be more accepting and encouraging so kids don't feel trapped [and can be more open about gay issues]."

Rahman himself has done his part to spread a sense of inclusion. For five-and-a-half years, he has co-hosted the Bengali-language talk show *Radio Adda* on FunAsia Radio, without hiding his orientation.

"The LGBT issue within our community is important to me personally since I got involved in the [LGBT and Bengali] communities. [Being gay] has been an accepted factor and they have come to me and thanked me for being out. I hope these movies do something similar for our community."

It's not just LGBT films, however, that the new festival is focused on; films starring the likes of Gillian Anderson, Mary Steenburgen and Justin Bartha, as well as directors from Singapore and Australia and Oscar winners like Emma Thompson and Jeffrey D. Brown are involved. The unifying theme has been to showcase how South Asians live in the real world. (Many of the films are in English, in part to appeal to the Dallas audiences, since more than a dozen languages are spoken by South Asians.)

Nevertheless, this is largely new ground for everyone. For three years, Hingorani did marketing and public relations for the New York In-

dian Film Festival, and Rahman has served as a judge for the Asian Film Festival of Dallas, but starting from scratch has presented a host of new challenges.

"I do PR and event management and was a television reporter and anchor covering arts and entertainment, so I understand this process better than you know," Hingorani says. "But it's a lot more pressure being the founder and festival director, cuz you really appreciate how much people go through when you have a bird's-eye view of everything from venues to tickets to after-parties."

The process has been a grueling one, taking a year to get off the ground. Hingorani and his staff have "consciously curated every film — this isn't a submission festival, it's an invitation-only festival. We picked films that were generating audience buzz and winning awards [overseas]." In total, 15 filmmakers will be flown in to attend the opening night VIP party and participate in post-screening Q&As. "We really want to create a true film festival atmosphere," he says. "I am shocked at how many people who are not South Asian are buying tickets — like 30 percent. It took the New York Indian Film Festival 10 years to get to those numbers."

And efforts are already underway for the second annual festival. "I already know what film festivals I'm going to, which board members will attend and that we want to focus on regional films," Hingorani says. "We're here to stay." ■

*Tickets are available for The Asian Pride Project/Fire in the Blood, which screens Feb. 28 at 2:15 p.m. with the filmmakers in attendance.*

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### OSCAR SCORECARD

The Gay Super Bowl, aka the Oscars, air Sunday, and this is one of the tightest races in many years. Here's my rundown of who you'll likely see on the podium ... and who deserves to be.

**Picture:** Who will/should win: *Birdman*, pictured ... though *Boyhood* is giving it a run for its money.

**Director:** Who will/should win: Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, *Birdman*.

**Actor:** Who will win: Eddie Redmayne, *The Theory of Everything*. Who should win: Michael Keaton, *Birdman*.

**Actress:** Who will/should win: Julianne Moore, *Still Alice*. A slam-dunk.

**Supporting Actor:** Who will/should win: J.K. Simmons, *Whiplash*.

**Supporting Actress:** Who will win: Patricia Arquette, *Boyhood*. Who should win: Emma Stone, *Birdman*.

**Original Screenplay:** Who will/should win: Wes Anderson, *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Finally.

**Adapted Screenplay:** Who will/should win: Graham Moore, *The Imitation Game*.

**Cinematography:** Who will/should win: *Birdman*. Possible spoiler: *Mr. Turner*.

**Film Editing:** Who will/should win: *Boyhood*.

**Production Design:** Who will/should win: *The Grand Budapest Hotel*.

**Costume Design:** Who will win: *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Who should win: *Into the Woods*.

**Score:** Who will win: *The Theory of Everything*. Who should win: *The Imitation Game*.

**Song:** Who will/should win: "Glory," from *Selma*.

**Sound Mixing:** Who will win: *Birdman*. Who should win: *Whiplash*.

**Sound Editing:** Who will/should win: *American Sniper*.



**Visual Effects:** Who will win: *Interstellar*. Who should win: *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*. Possible spoiler: *Guardians of the Galaxy*.

**Makeup:** Who will/should win: *Guardians of the Galaxy*.

**Foreign Language Film:** Who will win: *Ida*. Who should win: *Wild Tales*.

**Animated Feature:** Who will win: *How to Train Your Dragon 2*. Who should win: *Big Hero 6*.

**Documentary Feature:** Who will/should win: *Citizenfour*.

**Live Action Short:** Who will/should win: *Aya*.

**Animated Short:** Who will/should win: *Feast*.

**Documentary Short:** Who will/should win: *Crisis Hotline: Veterans Press 1*.

— A.W.J.

## GILLIGAN'S Fire ISLAND

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L+S stage

# Coco- nutty

Uptown's 'Gilligan's  
Island' spoof is its  
gayest, best yet

**ARNOLD WAYNE JONES** | Executive Editor  
[jones@dallasvoice.com](mailto:jones@dallasvoice.com)

The effectiveness of a spoof depends a lot on the audience's familiarity with the subject matter being spoofed. If you haven't seen the source material, then jokes making fun of its conventions tend to fall on deaf ears.

Of course, basically anyone under the age of 65 is familiar with *Gilligan's Island*, the mid-'60s sitcom set on a desert island populated by a diverse septet of castaways (sing it with me: "the million-airrrre... and his wiiiife... the movie starr..."). The premise was as far-fetched as a Chris Christie presidency (though Christie might make a good Skipper): they lived the life of Riley with coconut-powered everything, more wardrobe changes than a Cher concert and a parade of guest stars who always seemed to forget to have them rescued.

Jamie Morris specializes in parodies of well-worn reruns that are part of the gay Zeitgeist, and taps into all of these clichés admirably with his world premiere *Gilligan's Fire Island*, which Uptown Players presents weekends at the Rose Room. But Morris' genius here — his brilliant sleight-of-hand — is that Gilligan & Co. are not the target of his spoof: Gay culture is.

The centerpiece of this play — Morris' best to date, with structure, wit and a fine sense of the

characters — isn't one of the castaways but the so-called "guest star," a YouTube sensation named Cody Tanner (Angel Velasco). Cody is a shirtless party-boy who counts Twitter followers more than friends, thinks music didn't exist before Beyoncé and flirts as indiscriminately as an Idaho senator in an airport men's room. In short, he's every twink you've ever met.

Velasco — lean, muscular and hilarious as hell — steals the show with his rapid-fire head-bobbing, twerking and shade-throwing; he probably delivers half of every line of written dialogue because he chatters on dizzily. But as superficial as Cody is, Velasco humanizes him by making him equally sweet. He seems to like everybody, so they like him back. (It's the popular twink's secret weapon: sincerity.)

The remainder of the cast — including Morris veterans Kevin

Moore as the sexy, centered Professor, Chad Petersen as Mary Ann and Michael Moore as the Marilyn-esque Ginger — are all in top form, but Mikey Abrams, who plays both Mr. Howell (dead-on) and Lovey (excellent as well), embodies his characters most persuasively. (On the other hand, John Michael Colgin as Gilligan is a true Doppelgänger for Bob Denver.)

Director B.J. Cleveland captures the *Carol Burnett Show* tone perfectly, and the "Defying Gravity" bit is the most surprising delight in a totally delightful evening drifting on a sea of laughs. ■

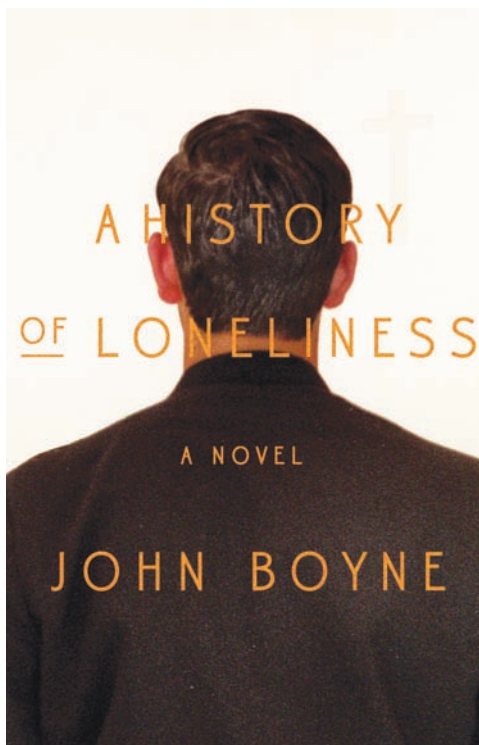
### GILLIGAN'S FIRE ISLAND

Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs  
Road. Through March 14, 8 p.m.  
[UptownPlayers.org](http://UptownPlayers.org).

**THE MILLIONAIRE AND HIS RENTBOY** | An over-sexed twink (Angel Velasco) finds a sugar daddy in Thurston Howell III (Mikey Abrams) on 'Gilligan's Fire Island.' (Photo courtesy Mike Morgan)

# Conspiracies of silence

John Boyne's follow-up to 'The Absolutist' is another amazing novel



*A History of Loneliness* by John Boyne (Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2015; \$26). 352 pp.

Once Odran Yates' mother informed him that he had "a vocation," Odran never questioned that he would become a priest. As a 16-year-old, Odran went to seminary in his native Ireland, where he roomed with Tom Cardle, the boy he considered his best friend.

While Odran was certain that he was perfectly suited for the priesthood, Tom was another matter. Tom tried to leave seminary only to have his father bring him back — black and blue. Odran wondered if that was why Tom was prone to fits of strangeness.

Though they eventually lost contact, Odran heard rumors that his friend was moved from parish to parish. That seemed odd, and was upsetting when the archbishop wanted Odran to leave his beloved position as librarian at a boys' college to take over in Tom's latest move. "I didn't know what to think ... But there's the lie," Odran said. "I did know what to think. Only I could not bring myself to think it."

Respectfully outraged, timely, scandalous and loaded with more than a little controversy, *A History of Loneliness* shimmers like a multifaceted diamond. Indeed, I barely know where

to start in my praise. John Boyne (*The Absolutist*) paints Odran as a simple man, the clueless, go-along-to-get-along type who likes to think of himself as responsible and intuitive. He's likeable but not really friendship material; he's predictable, gossipy and staid except on the occasions when he doubts his faith and his vows. That's when he surprises himself, as well as us. But Boyne doesn't stop there. In a setting of modern-day Ireland and Rome, Boyne populates this tale with close-lipped, complicated people; gives it dialogue rich with Irish brogue; and hands his readers plenty of exceptional back-plots.

That adds up to a stunner of a novel that feels like reading a movie, one that needs to jump to the top of your to-read list. But clear your calendar — once you start *A History of Loneliness*, you don't have a prayer.

*Soldier of Change: From the Closet to the Forefront of the Gay Rights Movement* by Stephen Snyder-Hill, foreword by George Takei (Potomac Books 2014; \$22.95). 198 pp.

Stephen Snyder-Hill says he'd always felt "this darkness I couldn't understand." His mother also noticed it, but he couldn't explain to her that he loathed himself. "When people say that being gay is a choice," he says, "I always remember trying to unchoose it."

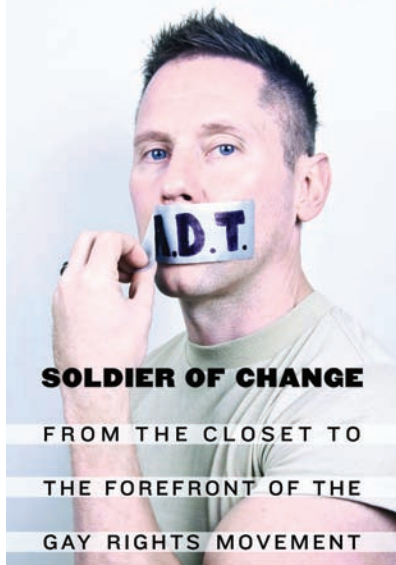
Coming from a long line of soldiers, he enlisted in the military, first stationed in Germany, then Iraq. That was where he decided that he was "going to finally start living my life for myself." But serving during "Don't ask, don't tell" meant he had to keep quiet about his sexuality. He endured indirect taunts from fellow soldiers and he learned to hide his love of (and marriage to) another man. Finally, fed up and coincidentally presented with a chance to ask a question of

the 2012 Republican candidates in a national debate, he crafted a query he thought might change things.

Reading this book is like having a beer with a buddy. It's chatty rather than stuffy, yet Snyder-Hill's outrage comes through loud and clear as he takes his story further, writing about life as a gay man during DADT days, his activism and the work he's done on behalf of gay and lesbian soldiers. This book is genuine, and I liked that, too. It's also one to enjoy if you want an informal, easy-to-like memoir. Even in this post-DADT time, *Soldier of Change* is a book to call for.

— Terri Schlichenmeyer

STEPHEN SNYDER-HILL  
FOREWORD BY GEORGE TAKEI



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L+S comedy

# Mount Everett

For plus-sized alt-cabaret queen  
Bridget Everett, size *does* matter

There's no denying that almost everyone who takes a first glance at Bridget Everett will find their eyes drifting down. Gay, straight, male, female — no one can resist Everett's tits.

And she is quite glad about it.

Decidedly bra-less, Everett is a feminist of a different kind. She's not standing up for all that Jezebel.com touts about every day, and she doesn't try to be the plus-size icon that burdens actress Melissa McCarthy. No, Everett's feminism is about being honest and brash about one thing: wanting dick. And naturally, that's endeared her to a legion of gay fans during her tenure performing in New York City.

Now she takes her act on the road, including her first-ever stop in Dallas; she'll perform at Sons of Hermann Hall at the end of the month. But first, she discussed her expectations for her inaugural Dallas experience and advice on how to get a mouthful.

— Rich Lopez

**Dallas Voice:** Can we start with the important stuff? I listened to your 2013 album *Pound It*, but mostly the song (and the video) "What I Gotta Do?" So, per your vocals, what does one have to do to get that dick in their mouth because my m.o. is not working. Bridget Everett: Of course! Well, some Chap Stick, a little bit of charm and a great attitude ... or just wait around until last call.

**Noted.** Thanks! So how did you decide to put Dallas on your tour? Don't they say everything is bigger in Texas? That seems like reason enough to me.

**They do say that.** I'm gonna stay until I can confirm that, by the way. That shouldn't be hard!

**Is that your one main expectation of Dallas?**

That, and my buddy Murray Hill told me the audiences in Dallas were on fire. So I'm expecting a great night.

**Yes, they can be flaming. After listening to your songs and watching your material on YouTube, I think you might be more of a gay man, than many gay men. How did you harness your gay appeal?** Easy. I'm just singing about the one thing I know we can all relate to.

**Very true. Your act is described as alt-cabaret. How do you define that label and how is your show different than standup?** I think you could say my show is definitely off the rails. Sort of like

### BRIDGET EVERETT

Sons of Hermann Hall,  
3414 Elm St. Feb. 28, 8 p.m. \$14.  
ParadeOfFlesh.com.



**FRUIT FLY** | Bridget Everett may be a buxom straight woman, but she just wants the same thing that every gay man wants: Big ... laughs.

punk rock meets standup meets cabaret — only with money notes and great tits — and no bra. Most standups wear a bra and don't have money notes.

**Are you not a fan of brassieres?** The first thing most women do when they get home is take off their bra. I want the environment at my shows to be just like we're in someone's home, getting drunk around the piano and some wild woman has the mike.

**I'm gonna quote from no less than The New York Times here: "Ms.**

**Everett's sizable proportions, are, after all, central to her shtick, the sort of down-and-dirty patter that big girls can get away with and Kate Moss types rarely do."** Why do you think that is and is it even a fair statement? That's a good question. You know, nobody

wants to hear Kate Moss talking about trying to get dick because we all know she gets plenty of very pretty dick. I'm not saying I don't get dick, but when a big girl with low riding titties talks about hitting a dry spell, it's probably easier to relate.

**Preach!** You were also quoted in NYT that your performance is "driven by love, but not sexual love." Can you elaborate? It's driven by my love of singing and my love of the audience and probably a need for just love. Nothing feels better to me than a great night of singing, making friends with the audiences and watching people let go. I really do love that.

**So what do you address in your shows?** Tits, chardonnay, fluffy kitties, motherhood, sex, bot-toming out (all meanings) and of course, love.

**Of course. Now what can your Dallas audiences and potential new fans expect from your show?** That we'll all get pregnant.



# Auto save

Your car could be your wallet's best friend ... or its worst enemy

**RICH LOPEZ** | Contributing Writer  
getrichindallas@gmail.com

Cars are like children or pets — they need constant attention, and when they are taken care of, they will take care of you. But if neglected, then expect to drop even more cash on maintenance.

Sean Collins, a certified mechanic and lube shop manager at Plaza Car Wash, offers these tips on tending to your cars needs so it can always be a sweet ride.

**Follow the guidelines.** "Maintaining the factory recommendations is one of two biggest things you can do to keep up a vehicle," he says. "That means regular oil changes, tires

checked, fluids changed and flushed and all that can get you up to 250,000–300,000 miles out of that car easily. And if not, then maybe about 100,000."



**Spic-n-span.** People who seem to spend way too much time making their car shine are actually doing a service to their rides — even if it just a vanity project.

"Keep it clean," Collins says. "Dirt or sand builds up and cakes on your car. What that does is start to tear up the paint job, but it also will capture moisture under the car and start rusting the undercarriage. A car wash is far cheaper than a paint job or fixing those parts."

**Air heads.** One of the most common oversights in car maintenance is underinflation of the tires. It can be not just detrimental, but catastrophic.

"This causes premature wear on the tires, but also significantly affects fuel mileage because of rolling resistance," Collins says. "Simply put, it takes more energy to move down the road which means filling up more often. And of course, low tires can cause a blow out."

**It's a syn.** Collins recommends opting for synthetic oils; in the long run, they save money. A conventional oil change is good up

■ **AUTO**, Next Page

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■ **AUTO**, From Previous Page

to 3,000 miles, but synthetic oil can last up to 6,000 miles, so you do it less often. That saves not just money, but down-time while your car is being serviced. And you *can* easily switch between them. “That’s an old wives’ tale that you can’t — going from conventional to synthetic won’t hurt a thing. Newer cars require it so just keep that in mind, but yes, I’d say go for the synthetic oil now,” he says.

**Skip the accessories.** Some conventional money savings steps aren’t really useful: “Fuel additives are pretty unnecessary except maybe once or twice a year,” Collins says.

**Lease is more.** For those with leased cars, a lack of maintenance can result in “negligence fees” by lease companies that can run into the thousand-dollar range.

Speaking of purchasing an auto, when it comes to buying a new car, Brian Smith of Toyota of Irving says some discounts can be found early on.

**Cold call.** “It’s always best to call the dealership ahead of time and speak with a sales rep,” he advises. “You can always feel free to ask if there are any rebates or special finance incentives such as zero percent interest and what cars have those monthly incentives.”

**Forget the bank.** Smith notes that many credit unions maintain relationships with dealerships. This can lead to saving money and



**GOOD CLEAN FUN** | Off-roading is fun, but be sure to wash down your ride when you’re done — built-on mud and dirt not only affects the paint job (which is costly to repair), but can contribute to premature corrosion of the undercarriage.

time on negotiating prices.

**New vs. used.** Think buying used is cheaper? You’re insurance company might not. “Some insurance companies may give you a

10–15 percent discount for buying a new car rather than a pre-owned car,” Smith says.

Additionally, look into store memberships. Shops like Costco offer auto programs where

vehicles including boats, motorcycles and, of course, cars are already priced for members. Benefits extend to service and maintenance after purchasing.

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## Tuesday 02.24

### Tony Award-winner 'Kinky Boots' makes its North Texas debut

Since it was announced on DSM's season, *Kinky Boots* has been the most anticipated musical of the year. And why not? Harvey Fierstein, Cyndi Lauper and a bunch of too-cool-for-school drag queens in shiny leather footwear? It's the musical every gay man has waited his life for.

**DEETS:** Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. Feb. 24–March 8. DallasSummerMusicals.org.



## Tuesday 02.24



### Actress Laverne Cox speaks at UNT lecture series

It hasn't taken long for Laverne Cox to grow from supporting player in an online TV show to Emmy Award nominee to Time magazine cover girl to icon of the trans community. She'll no doubt speak about all that — and who knows what else — when she takes the podium at UNT's Coliseum on Tuesday for her lecture entitled *Ain't I a Woman: My Journey to Womanhood*.

**DEETS:** The Coliseum on the University of North Texas campus, 600 Avenue D, Denton. 6 p.m. doors, 7 p.m. curtain. \$10. UNTUnionTickets.com.



## Thursday 02.26

### Sexy cellists make Dallas bow

First came the YouTube video of these dueling hotties, transforming Michael Jackson's "Smooth Criminal" into a mix of classic music and furious passion. Then an appearance on *Glee*. And finally, the duo that make up the group 2 Cellos — Luka and Stjepan — arrive in Dallas for their North Texas debut in their concert, entitled *Celloverse*. Prepare to be dazzled by their musicianship of popular songs by the likes of U2 and Coldplay ... and maybe even swoon a little at their smoldering good looks.

**DEETS:** Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. ATPAC.org

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## ARTSWEEK: NOW PLAYING

### THEATER

***Gilligan's Fire Island.*** Spoofmeister Jamie Morris takes on the iconic sitcom with a gay twist in this bonus show from Uptown Players, a drag comedy performed at the Rose Room inside S4. *Reviewed this week.* 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Through March 14. UptownPlayers.org.

***The Last Two People on Earth: A Vaudeville Apocalypse.*** The world premiere of this two-man show — Mardy Patinkin and Taylor Mac — about communication told through song and dance. Directed and choreographed by Susan Stroman. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, 2351 Performance Drive, Richardson. Through Feb. 22. EisemannCenter.com.

***The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence.*** Madeleine George' Pulitzer-finalist, time-traveling play about invention, artificial intelligence and human relationship. Stage West, 821 W. Vickery Blvd., Fort Worth. Feb. 20–March 22. StageWest.org.

***I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change.*** The return of the Valentine's staple, a series of musical sketches about love and romance from queer composer Joe DiPietro. Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through March 1 (extended). Theatre3Dallas.com.

***Lovely Confessions.*** Mark-Brian Sonna's lovable "most famous third-rate drag queen in Texas," Lovely Uranus, is back for more tutorials in love in her quest to find the love of her life. A world premiere by Alejandro de la Costa. *Final weekend.* Stone Cottage Theatre, 15650 Addison Road. MBSProductions.net.

***Sexy Laundry.*** A long-time married couple try to spice up their lives with a weekend romantic getaway at a luxury hotel, but things don't go as planned in this farce, which reunited Wendy Welch and Bob Hess, Dallas Voice's co-honorees as Actor of the Year in 2014 for *Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike*. *Final weekend.* Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

***The Book of Mormon.*** Hilarious Tony-winning musical from the creators of *South Park*. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Through Sunday. ATPAC.org.

***My Name Is Asher Lev.*** Circle Theatre kicks off its 34th season with this adaptation of the Chaim Potok novel. Circle Theatre, 230 W. Fourth St., Fort Worth. Through March 7. CircleTheatre.com.

***In Real Life.*** The third installment of Charlayne Woodward's trilogy of plays about an African-American actress making it in the 1960s and '70s. Jubilee Theatre, 506 Main St., Fort Worth. Through March 1. JubileeTheatre.org.

***Perky & Zen.*** Return of the comedy two-woman show *Nipples to the Wind*, written by Paula Coco. *Final weekend.* Black Box Theatre, 8004 Dallas Parkway, Suite 200, Frisco. FriscoCommunityTheatre.com.

***The School for Wives and Medea.*** Dallas Theater Center presents two classic plays in rep — one a saucy Moliere comedy, the other Euripides' devastating tragedy. Directed by Kevin Moriarty. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. In previews through Feb. 28, with openings for both on March 1. Through March 29. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

***The Echo Room Presents: Her Song.*** The encore engagement of Echo Theatre's show specifically created for Valentine's Day. *Final weekend.* Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Drive. EchoTheatre.org.

***Twelfth Night: A Musical Comedy Carnival.*** A rollicking, Mardi Gras-inspired take on Shakespeare. Rose Marine Theater, 1440 N. Main St., Fort Worth. Through March 1. ArtesDeLaRosa.org.

***Uncle Vanya.*** Dallas Actor's Lab presents the Texas premiere of this translation of Chekhov's classic, part of the Elevator Series at the Wyly Theatre. *Final weekend.* 9th Floor Theater, 2400 Flora St. TicketDFW.org.



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**NPH MOVES FROM TONY TO OSCAR** | Following Ellen DeGeneres last year, for the second year in a row the host of the Oscars is gay — this time, frequent Tony host Neil Patrick Harris.

**New Play Competition.** The 13th annual presentation of six short plays, all by local playwrights (including gay writer and former winner Buster Spiller), voted on by audience members. Presented by TeCo Theatrical Productions. Bishop Arts Theatre, 215 S. Tyler St. Through March 1. TecoTheater.org.

### CIRCUS

***Cavalia: Odysseo.*** Dallas premiere of the new Cavalia, a Cirque du Soleil-ish show featuring horses, as well as acrobatic performers. DrPepper Ballpark, 7300 Rough Riders Trail, Frisco. Extended run — now through March 8. \$29.50–\$229.50. Cavalia.net.

### FINE ART

***What's Up Doc? The Animation Art of Chuck Jones.*** A exhibit celebrating the iconic cartoons of the Oscar-winning animator, from Pepe LePew to Bugs and Elmer. Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, 1600 Gendy St., Fort Worth. Through April 26. FWMuseum.org.

***Between Action and the Unknown: The Art of Kazuo Shigara and Sadamasa Motonaga.*** A side-by-side examination of the art of two of the post-war Japanese

avant garde art movement known as Gutai, which sought not to transform matter but bring it to life with experimental techniques. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through July 15. DMA.org.

***Modern Opulence in Vienna: The Wittgenstein Vitrine.*** The DMA's conservationists restore this century-old display case of silver, lapis and glass — an amazing example of Viennese craftsmanship. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Oct. 18. Free. DMA.org.

***The Mary Baskett Collection of Japanese Fashion.*** Stunning couture from three of Japan's most iconic fashion designers. *Final weekend.* Crow Collection of Asian Art, 2010 Flora St.

### EXHIBIT

***The International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes.*** The Baker Street Irregulars are the focus of this elementary tribute to Sir A. Conan Doyle's enduring creation, the master consulting detective and cocaine addict. Includes interactive mystery-solving adventures. Perot Museum of Nature and Science, 2201 N. Field St. Through May 10. PerotMuseum.org.

## FRIDAY 02.20

### COMMUNITY

**Panoptikon.** The (now) weekly retro disco dance party, presented by Lord Byron. Red Light, 2911 Main St. Door 9 p.m.

## SATURDAY 02.21

### SPORTS

**FrontRunners.** Gay jogging group meets at 8:30 a.m. at the statue in Lee Park for a run along the Katy Trail.

### COMMUNITY

**Gaybingo.** This month's theme incorporates Uptown Players' current production of *Gilligan's Fire Island*, with members of the cast in attendance. The Rose Room inside S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 5 p.m. doors, 6 p.m. play. MyResourceCenter.org.

### FUNDRAISER

**Hooch & Pooch.** The annual party and benefit for Uptown's Kitchen Dog Theater includes auction items, booze, snacks and a buncha cool people chillin'. The MAC, 3120 McKinney Ave. 8–11 p.m. \$60–\$75. KitchenDogTheater.org.

## SUNDAY 02.22

### COMMUNITY

**Drag Brunch.** Drag Brunch comes early this month! (Hey, it's February.) Jenni P hosts all three seatings of this one-of-a-kind tradition, which includes a three-course meal and specialty cocktails. Dish, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m. \$30. Dish-Dallas.com.

**He Said, She Said.** A party benefiting the Human Rights Campaign, with Cassie Nova and Jenna Skyy hosting. Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St. 2 p.m.

### BROADCAST

**The Academy Awards.** Red carpet glamour and tense moments, plus host Neil Patrick Harris, make this the Super Bowl of gay life. Airs on ABC at 6 p.m.

**Downton Abbey.** The fifth season of the addictive drama about life among the aristocracy continues. Airs on KERA at 8 p.m.

**Girls.** The fourth season of the quirky comedy-drama about modern living, co-starring Andrew Rannells and Zachary Quinto. Airs on HBO at 8 p.m.

**Looking.** The second season of the drama about gay life in San Francisco, starring Jonathan Groff. Airs on HBO at 8:30 p.m.

## MONDAY 02.23

### EXERCISE

**Adult Broadway Butt Busters.** DTC artistic associate Joel Ferrell leads an hour-long cardio-centric fitness class based on B'way choreography for an eight-week session each Monday evening. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through March 2. 5:30–6:30 p.m. \$150. ATPAC.org.

## TUESDAY 02.24

### FILM

**The Spy Who Loved Me.** The best of Roger Moore's Bond pictures included a memorable score (and title song) and a thrilling opening sequence on skis. Screens as part of the Tuesday New Classic series at Landmark's Magnolia in the West Village, 3699 McKinney Ave. Sponsored by Dallas Voice. Screens at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.

### LECTURE

**Laverne Cox — Ain't I a Woman: My Journey to Womanhood.** The trans actress speaks at UNT's Marj Jo and V. Lane Rawlins Fine Art Series. The Coliseum. 600 Ave D, Denton. 6 p.m. doors, 7 p.m. curtain.

### THEATER

**Kinky Boots.** The smash Tony Award winner, written by Harvey Fierstein and with a score by Cyndi Lauper, makes its North Texas debut. Drag queens, union workers and leather — what more could you want? Presented by Dallas Summer Musicals. Music Hall at Fair Park, 901 First Ave. Feb. 24–March 8. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

## THURSDAY 02.26

### THEATER

**Bull.** Mike Bartlett, who wrote *Second Thought* Theatre's controversial *Cock* last season, now brings us *Bull*, which addresses the hot-button issue of bullying. Wyly Theatre 6th Floor Studio. 2400 Flora St. Feb. 26–March 14. 2TT.co.

**Mike Daisey: The Great Tragedies.** The acclaimed (and controversial) spoken-word performer brings his storytelling to Dallas as part of the Off Broadway on Flora Series. Harmon Hall inside the Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Feb. 26–28. ATPAC.org.

### CONCERTS

**2 Cellos: Celloverse.** Sexy musicians Luka and Stjepan perform contemporary music on the cello. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. ATPAC.org.

this week's solution

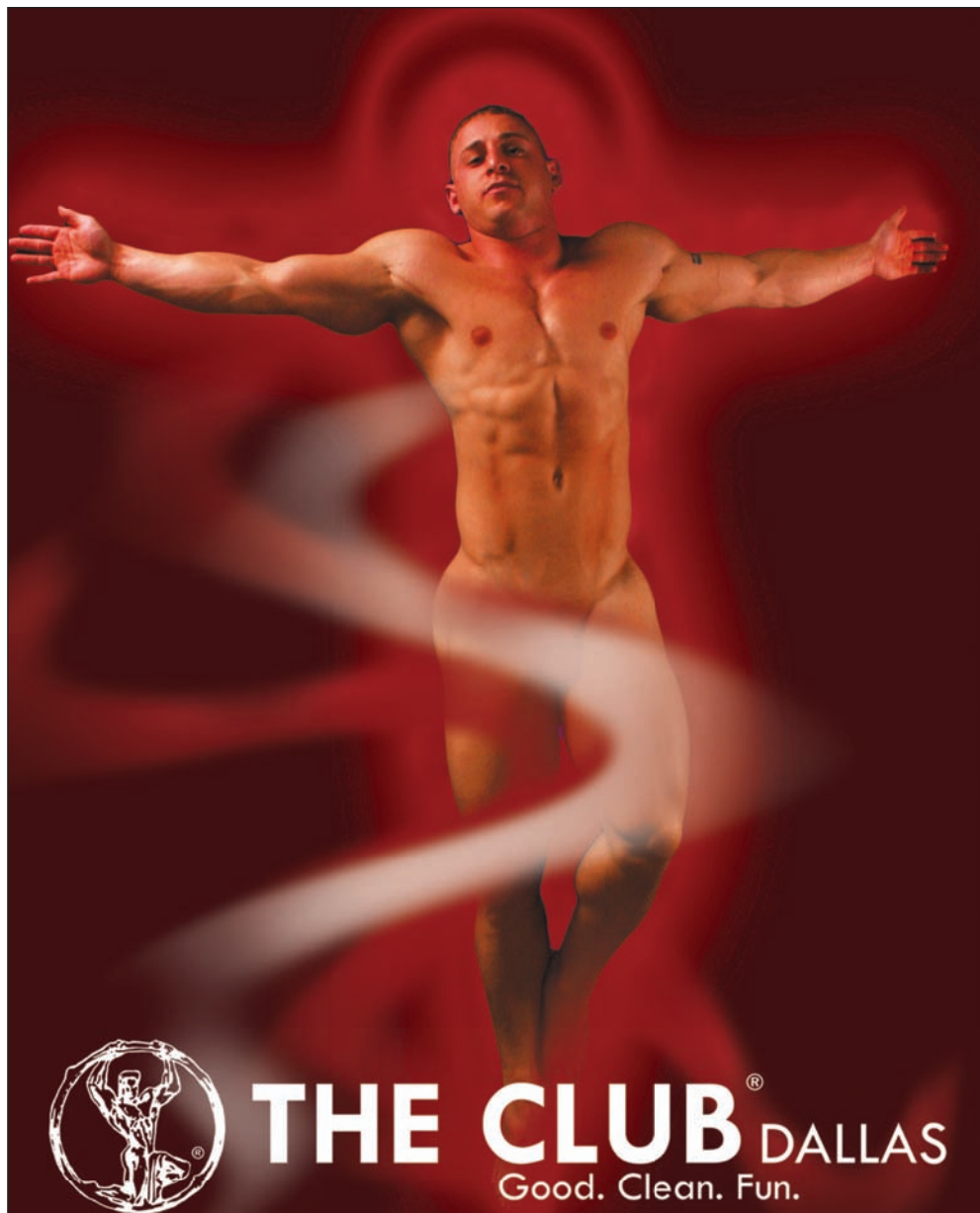


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# Cassie Nova

Invisible queen? Meet ninja Cassie!

I have a confession to make: I was a teenage ninja.

Maybe a little explanation is in order.

It was the late 1980s and my best friend/ brother-from-another-mother, Mike, was obsessed with movies like *American Ninja*, *Enter the Ninja* and *Revenge of the Ninja*. So I, wanting to be “like Mike,” was subsequently obsessed as well. We decided to ask our parents for ninja suits for Christmas. I remember how happy I was opening my present full of ninja gear, including these hideous split toe tabi boots. Gay bells did go off in my head when I noticed that the color of the shoes did not completely match the outfit. The boots were a dark cobalt blue while the ninja suit was a beautiful onyx. I eventually

learned to live with the mismatched ensemble. Anyway, the first chance we had to go “training” in the woods, we were off! Running and hiding in full head-to-toe Japanese assassin gear all over Crawford Park in Pleasant Grove. (Shout out to all the Grove rats!) We were awesome teenage ninjas, invisible to all.

I remember one day, after hours of stealth activities like running, jumping and climbing trees, we decided to sit down to rest near the jogging trail. We were taking a break but like true ninjas, we were unseen as two old ladies decided they had to take a break from their power-walking. One of the old biddies, in an adorable powder blue track suit that matched her hair, decided she had to pee. She walked directly towards us. Less than three feet away, she turned, dropped trou, squatted and started to relieve herself. Mortified, I looked at Mike. All I could see were his eyes, which screamed, “Do not move!” I complied, even when the woman’s stream of urine rolled towards me. Time slowed down as a



river of old lady tinkle was headed right for me. My only options were either jump up and probably give the poor ol’ lady a heart attack, or let the flood hit me and soak into my awesome new ninja garb. I weighed my options: Is it considered murder if she has a heart attack caused by me revealing myself? Would I go to prison? I would not do well in prison — I was (and am) way too pretty. I decided to let the flood hit me where I sat. To my amazement, her wiz decided to take a turn and flowed between Mike and me. It missed us by inches. She finished, stood, pulled up her pants and power-walked away. We high-fived each other for our incredible invisibility skills and went the other way.

That was also the first time I remember wearing eyeliner. Gay bell! The guyliner was to help make our eyes more Asian like that super ninja, Sho Kosugi. Looking back, I see how completely racist that was, but hey, we were paying tribute and didn’t know any better. Ah! The ’80s! A simpler, better time, when teenage boys could run around the park completely covered in black fabric with nothing but their lined eyes showing and not be arrested. But then again, you cannot arrest what you cannot see.

*Dear Cassie, How do you handle being at a bar and an attractive person buys you a drink you know you don't want (because of the type of liquor in it). Should I play nice, suck it up and drink it, knowing it will make me nauseous or do you decline and leave them standing there holding it? Thanks, Brian.*

*Dear Brian, Since I have worked in a bar for more than 20 years, this is a great question for me. There are actually a few ways to handle this situation. You can try the “fake sip” until he isn’t looking, then ditch it. Or try the flirty method and tell him “let’s share it!” Get two straws and sip it together, letting him down most of it. Or you can try honesty: Tell him “I can’t drink that, it messes with my stomach.” If he is really interested, he won’t care what you drink, or even if you drink. Good luck, Cassie.*

*Dear Cassie Nova, I am an up-and-coming drag queen in Dallas, but I have noticed that my love life has taken a backseat. I have started talking to guys on dating apps, but the minute I mention I do drag, I get an instant block or get “friend-zoned.” I know some queens will date other queens, but that’s not my thing. So should I just not tell these guys I am a lady-boy a few times a week, or should I continue to be honest? Signed, Searching For Love.*

*Dear Searching, Tough question. I am all for honesty, but a lot of guys in our community don’t “get” drag. Drag queens get a bad rap from many of our manly prospects. A lot of guys don’t understand that most drag queens are just playing a part. It’s not that we want to be women — it’s that we want to entertain. That said, I get the other side, too. When I was single, I would have never dated a lady-boy — sister dick makes me sick. I do believe there is someone out there for everyone. You might try holding back on telling someone that you drag until you really get a feel for how they will take it. Don’t lie about it, just withhold information until you know whether they can handle it. I’ve said it over and over again: “It takes a real man to date a drag queen.” And they have to be a little bit crazy, too.*

*Here is another bit of advice. Make sure drag is really what you want to do. It’s not for everyone. It’s an expensive, all-consuming path. Hope this helps, Cassie.*

*If I were asked which I prefer — the anonymity and invisibility of being a ninja or the over-the-top stardom of being a drag queen — the answer is easy: As Cassie, I love being a drag queen, but as James ... I miss being a ninja! So now I disappear into the shadows.*

*Remember to always love more, bitch less and be fabulous. XOXO, Cassie Nova.*

*If you have a question and want to suggest for Ask a Drag Queen — or just have some juicy gossip to share — email it to AskCassieNova@gmail.com.*



Jen and John at S4.



Andy, Joey and Dannee at The Brick.



Zach and John at S4.



Girls' night out at The Round-Up Saloon.



Friends' night out at the Dallas Eagle.

Making the **SCENE** the week of Feb. 20–26:

**Alexandre's:** Jason Huff at 10 p.m. on Friday. **Orthodox Mardi Gras Party** at 9 p.m. on Saturday and **Scott Bucklin Trio** at 10 p.m. on Saturday. **Mi Diva Loca** at 9 p.m. on Wednesday. **Lala Johnson** at 9 p.m. on Thursday.

**Brick/Joe's:** Dallas Voice sponsors **Karaoke Mega Star Monday** hosted by Eric Way on Monday. Cash and prizes awarded each week of the six-week contest. Open mic at 9 p.m. and contest at 10:30 p.m.

**Changes:** Imperial Court show at 8 p.m. on Friday.

**Club Reflection:** Trinity River Bears meeting at 2:30 and cookout at 4 p.m. on Sunday.

**Dallas Eagle:** Honey Pot Dance with DJ Woofy B at 10 p.m. on Friday. DFW Leather Corps seminar on Saturday at 2 p.m. United Court of the Lone Star Empire presents **Angels vs Demon** benefiting Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund. Cocktails at 6 p.m. and show at 7 p.m. on Saturday.

**Garlow's:** Miss Tri Cities, part of the Miss Gay Texas state pageant system on Saturday at 8 p.m. Male interview at 2 p.m. hosted by Miss Gay Texas State at Large 2015 Onyx Anderson and Miss Gay Texas State Sapphire Ray Brooks with Miss Tri Cities State at Large 2014 Sylvia Lynn Larose and Miss Tri Cities State 2014 The Countess Piranha benefiting LifeWalk.

**JR.'s Bar & Grill:** Cassie's Freakshow on Monday. Net Chix with Krystal and Asia on Tuesday.

**Round-Up Saloon:** Oscar Party at 7 p.m. on Sunday. Karaoke Out Loud at 9 p.m. on Monday.

**Sue Ellen's:** Cherry Bomb on Friday. Lauren Alexander Band on Saturday. HRC event 2–7 p.m. Tyla Trio 7–10 p.m. on Sunday. Jessica Grai on Wednesday. ■

To view more Scene photos, go to [DallasVoice.com/category/photos](http://DallasVoice.com/category/photos). Scene Photographer: Kat Haygood.





Staff at The Grapevine Bar.



Joy at Sue Ellen's.



Jared and Mark at Mitchell Gold+Bob Williams Chamber mixer.

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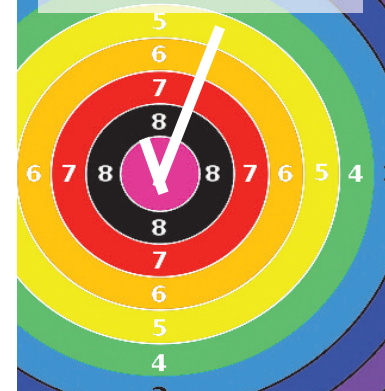
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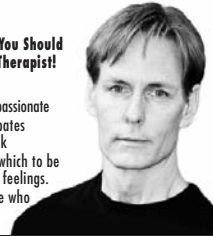
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Do you wanna ride? JOIN SPECTRUM MOTORCYCLE RIDING CLUB, the largest GLBT motorcycle group in the region. Please visit: spectrum-mrc.com to learn more."

Pegasus Squares, an LGBT Square Dance Club, meets every Sunday from 2:30pm-4:30pm at the Resource Center. Beginner lessons start in October. Contact Rob Miller at 682-238-3442 for more information or visit pegasus-squares.com.

Volunteer Needed!! Be part of an exciting team and make a difference in someone's life. Volunteers will be trained to conduct HIV outreach in the GLBT community working along side of trained Risk Reduction Specialists. For more information contact **Sonny Blake @ 214-522-8600 Ext. 236**

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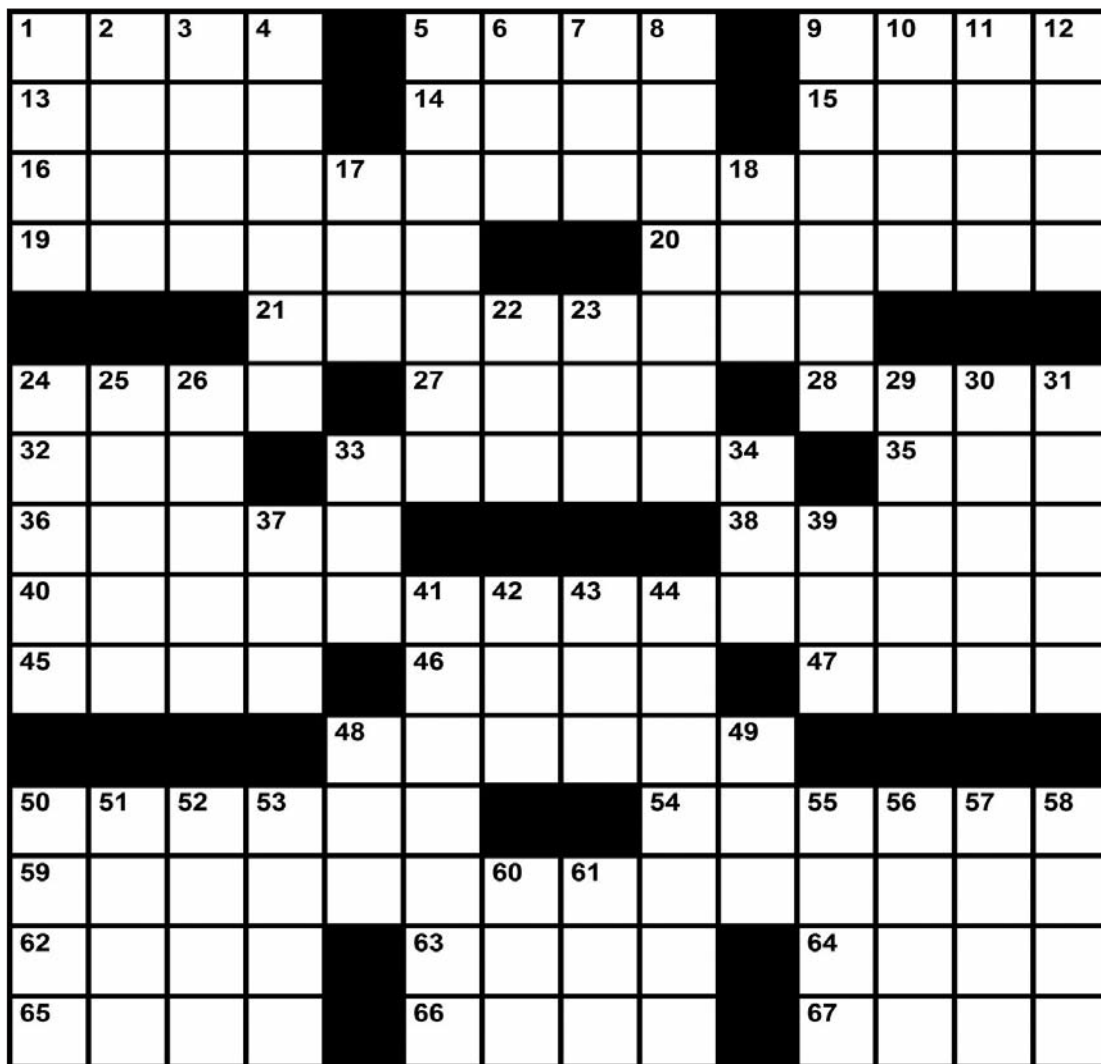
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## q-puzzle



## Sam Smith's Secret to Success

Solution on page 29

### Across

- Poses for Mapplethorpe
- Peter Pan* critter, for short
- Job for Burr's Mason
- Booty
- Locks in a salon
- Chip in a chip
- Start of Sam's secret
- Jane Spahr, for one
- Elevator alternative
- More of the secret
- Greenish-yellow fruit
- Deity identified with Diana
- Nuts and bolts
- A, as in Acapulco
- Parts for Dykes on Bikes
- Constellation over Sydney
- The Lion King* king
- Spoof
- More of the secret
- Zipper problem
- Caesar's last question
- Film canine
- Coat for Mary's lamb
- Paranormal
- \_\_\_ Records (Etheridge label)

### Down

- You don't want to get a pink one
- Least bit
- Pulls behind
- Back talk, slangily
- Laugh coined by Lewis Carroll
- Hauled ass
- Tin Man's request
- Chappell of soaps
- Where *Pride* Vision originated
- Voting no
- Direction from Rick Rodgers
- Phallic swimmers
- Signal that goes either way
- Shoshonean tongue
- IRS review
- Composition of some chains
- Arrests

- Burger layer
- Rio step
- Sites for three men in a tub
- Balkan native
- He comes once a year
- Homophobe/attorney general Bondi of Florida
- Lotion letters at South Beach
- Ask on one's knees
- Hollywood's Hagen
- He came after Gorbachev
- Sault \_\_\_ Marie
- Summer for Rimbaud
- One hell of a guy?
- Sore throat producer
- Night school subj.
- Sgt. Snorkel's pooch
- Split in the skin
- Pre-kiss insert
- Dave Pallone and others
- Billie Jean King's zip
- Blown away
- Uncool sort
- Make-or-break date
- Land in la mer, for Debussy
- Snoopy group

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